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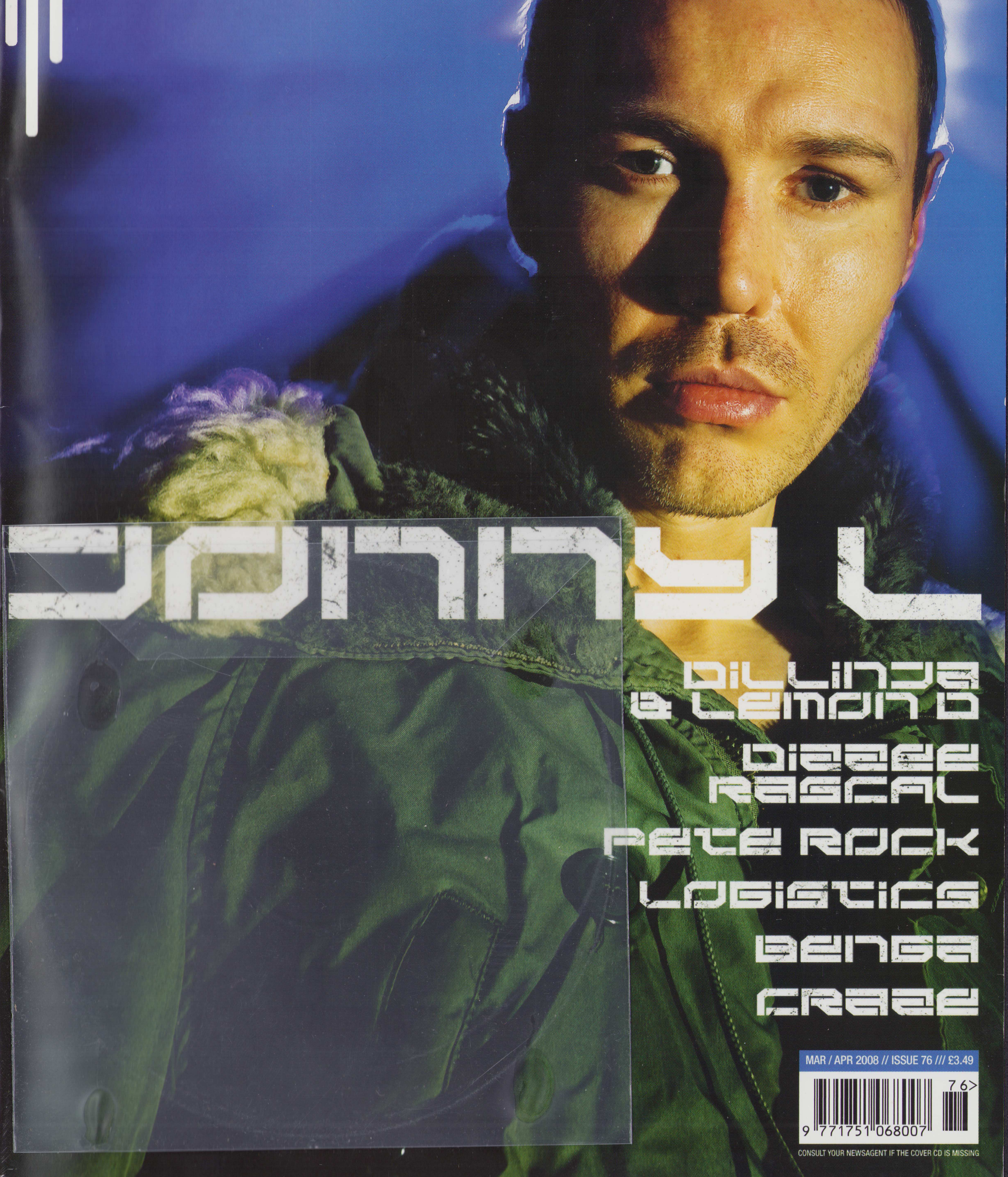

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ATM WORLDWIDE
THE DRUM & BASS AND UNDERGROUND MUSIC CULTURE PAGES

EDITOR'S NOTE

We've secured another first in this issue of ATM by giving Jonny L the first cover of his career (pages 46-48). Like many who lived and breathed drum and bass through the 90s right up until the present day, we recognise Jonny's status as a producer is up there with the very best of them and from a writers' point of view it gave me a rare chance to ask the questions that I'd wanted to from this understated and media-shy character. The result is an intriguing read taking in diverse subjects like XL Recordings, his passion for music-making, Posh Spice, why he declines worldwide DJ work, and Bradley from S Club 7 (no joke). It's an interview that ties in with our plans to tell stories in ATM that haven't been told before and I hope you enjoy it.

Another character in this issue who has an XL Recordings connection is Dizzee Rascal. The interview (pages 16-17) was inspired by Dizzee's Kool FM recording and finding out that one of the UK's biggest music artists originally wanted to be "a jungle DJ", when he was just a kid was great to hear. With other features taking in 10 Years of Valve (Dillinja & Lemon D), Pete Rock, Logistics, Craze, The Insiders and the super-hot dubstep phenomenon Benga, amongst others, I think it's fair to say that ATM is stepping up its game.

The other thing you will notice in this Issue is that we've given the interviews a graphical makeover to show, in combination with the new and exciting content, we're continually striving to improve. I'd be happy to hear what you think of the changes. You can always get in touch through MySpace address below or via email: editor@atm-mag.com

Finally on a more sombre note, during writing this, I've found out about the sad death of a Manchester-based DJ / producer and all round top guy, James Brown (DJ Sine). A nicer guy you couldn't have hoped to meet, so I'd like to dedicate this Issue to James.

ATM's Assistant Editor, Jon Ethics, would like this Issue to be in memory of Panos Gregoriou.

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myspace.com/djmarkod

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Contact: alex@atm-mag.com

word on the streets

GHETTO FABULOUS

DimePiece is a Los Angeles-based label whose designs are inspired by the LA lifestyle, women of the past, culture, drugs and political wars. This is reflected in their latest exclusive tee 'Makeup Not War' expressing their opinion about the wars going on.

The Ladies of DimePiece, Laura Marie, Ashley and a masked rabbit officially established DimePiece during the summer of 200 when they released a seven piece line. This range was to get females to reconsider their role in the game. DimePiece felt it was crucial to create an identity that speaks for itself through its taste, style and visual communication.

No gimmicks seen here, these designs are not part of the biting schemes that have taken over the world of streetwear. These girls are smart, fly and armed with fashion degrees; they are very opinionated when it comes to women in society, politics and everyday social standards. DimePiece is damn forward, proud and is for all the genuine ladies out there who are memorable and filled with all types of appeal. You can check the girls of DimePiece out at:
www.myspace.com/dimepiecedesigns

GIRL POWER

What do you get when you have a Get It Girl attitude mixed with Marilyn Monroe rockin' a bandana? Old Baby Doll. This label has come through with a hot range of women's street tees; the most craved being the Signature OBD Gangsta tee.

Sabrina Thornton is the creator of Old Baby Doll and she has loved fashion for as long as she can remember; she would watch re-runs of The Brady Bunch in awe of the clothing. This lil' lady is educated in fashion design and marketing which is the perfect combination for pursuing a career in the fashion world.

Old Baby Doll was established in the summer of 2007 in Atlanta USA and the story behind this name is the view of women as Baby Dolls, in the way the ladies like to get glammed up and be admired. Old Baby Doll says, "No matter how old a women is she should want to look her best". The designs are taken from the past so it makes sense to have the name, Old Baby Doll.

There is a strong message for women behind the designs of these tees and that is to push and motivate the ladies of our society to be all you can be no matter what obstacles she maybe facing. This is Get It Girl clothing so she lets no man or obstacle get in the way of what it is she wants to achieve.

Old Baby Doll has some projects on the horizon involving music, videos and print collaborations. Watch out for the Spring / Summer 2008 range coming soon.
www.oldbabydoll.com / myspace.com/oldbabydoll

MEDIUM: THE RIGHT SIZE

Medium recently celebrated its first birthday with a killer event featuring Breakage (playing an exclusive dubstep set), Flight and Zero T at the most excellent Plastic People venue in London. Plastic People has a great sound system and it's a nice, intimate space for Medium's events.

The promoters have kept things fresh and interesting, in an often saturated marketplace, by getting their guests to do something beyond the ordinary and so they've hosted Martyn's first ever dubstep set in London, Marcus Intalex's first London techno set and the first ever electro set from Sub Focus.

Add to this guest appearances from D&B artists such as Break, The Brookes Brothers, D-Bridge, Paradox, Fracture, Icicle, Matt Domino, Sabre and Rohan and you can see why they're building a good reputation. Watch out for more exclusive sets from Medium in 2008.

GILLES PETERSON
To celebrate the release of three new CDs forming Gilles Peterson's 'In The House' compilation, Defected has launched the Gilles Player, an embeddable player including cuts from the forthcoming release. Also out now or in the near future on Defected Records are; Bob Sinclair – 'Live At The Playboy Mansion', Defected Presents 'Mix Classics', the Faya Combo Sessions mixed by DJ Gregory, and Gilles Peterson's 'In The House'. The player is available for free to members of the Defected website. Get on there and sign up at www.defected.com

WATCH THE RIDE
TC's massive mix entitled 'Watch The Ride' featuring MC Jakes is now available everywhere, including HMV. Following TC on mix duties is none other than High Contrast whose contribution to the exciting series is reviewed in this very issue.

NEW TECHNOLOGY
Tech:nology are pleased to have moved into a new venue (The Rhythm Factory) and have definitely found a new home. After the success of the third birthday party in January they have been able to secure a bi-monthly night starting in May. The first date of the new residency is Friday 16th May. As usual, the event will include cutting edge D&B of the moment, with plenty of artists scheduled to appear. Check www.technologydnb.com for more info.

J-TEK RECORDS
J-Tek is a new label coming from a crew consisting of Outrage, Digital, Modular, Aperture and Randall, bringing back the long lost jungle techno sound. Fusing classic 4/4 rhythms and syncopated funk breakbeats, J-Tek attempts to re-awaken a classic age of electronic music and works within the crossover friendly 140-150 BPM range. With a massive scope of influence and experience, the output will be more than interesting. The first release is 'Falling Bombs', 'Living In A Basement' from Modular.

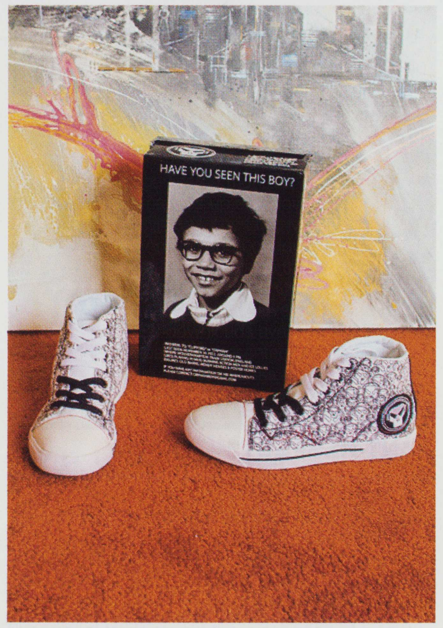
RISING STYLES
As part of their hip-hop festival to be held later in the year, Rising Styles are releasing a 2008 Soundtrack CD. The compilation will feature some of the best new and exclusive tracks from the UK scene. The submissions are now closed to find some of the hottest tracks from signed or unsigned artists. Anyone who missed out should get online and get ready for next year's album. www.risingstyles.com

LAST.FM
Last.FM are promoting a new event billed as the 'Italo-Disco, Electro and Bassline-House Spectacular!', planned for Thursday 13th March at Bethnal Green Working Men's Club. Incredibly, this event is free and features live performances from Tetine, Heartbreak and The RGB's (Protégées of Groove Armada), as well as DJs Love's Tru Flavour and European Man.

HIGHER GROUND
The long awaited Young Ax debut album has finally arrived courtesy of German label, Santorin Records. Described as bridging the gap between musical ambition and rocking the dancefloor, 'Higher Ground' features 'Into The Deep', 'Soulsearchin', 'U Got It' and 'Brite Nite', as well as many more from this Berlin producer.

INNOVATION ARENA
On Saturday 5th April the Innovation crew are teaming up with Drum and Bass Arena for a spectacular night at London's premiere new D&B venue, The Coronet. The night boasts four rooms of music including D&B, jungle, liquid and dubstep. The line-up is too huge to list, so check the link. Also coming up from Innovation is a return to Spain for 'Innovation in the Sun', a now firmly established seven night D&B festival back for the fifth year, this time in the Costa Brava. Expect most artists to be there, including Andy C, Hype, Friction, Nu:Tone, Vicious Circle, Loxy, Dillinja, G Dub, London Elektricity, Mampi Swift. For info go to www.innovation.gb.com

AUTOPSY
The next event from Autopsy at the Volks Club in Brighton will take place on Friday 21st March. Featuring a two hour set from none other than Tehnical Itch, also performing are Dub One, Nekrosis, The Sith, Herbal and Raw. This darkside event also features a dubstep room and the legendary Gramps 15k Sound System.



HOT FOOT!

Those of you who like the exclusivity that a pair of limited edition fresh sneakers offer, should fix up and look sharp as Metalheadz are releasing a new shoe paying homage to the label. This one-off range of Converse-style high-top boots come in only one style and colour (see the picture). There are only 200 hand made pairs and Goldie has personally tagged the heel on each shoe. They come in an original box design, picturing the young and talented Goldie. Buy on site. Available online, at the soon to be relaunched: www.metalheadz.co.uk

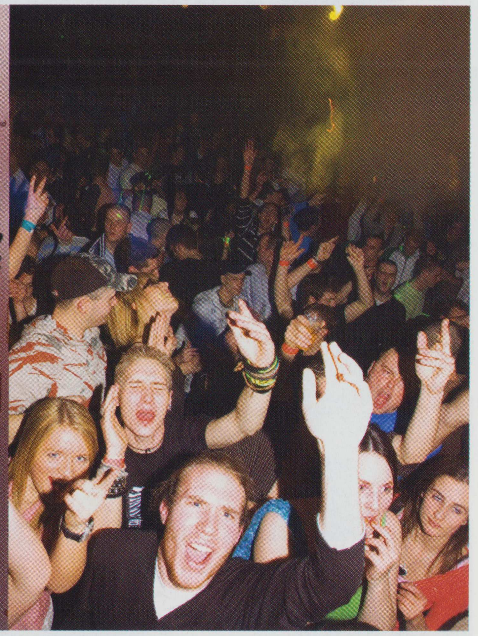
LIVE ERA

Live Era have organised a month's worth of beats and bass performances up and down the UK. Featured artists will be Epoc Live, Miloopa (Unicode Album Launch), Analog and London Breakbeat Orchestra. Mixing it up alongside the bands will be DJs Chef, Tez, Dutti B, McMash Clan and special guests. To get a taste of what Live Era is about there will be 1000 FREE downloads available from March 20th. The download will presented by Epoc Live and will contain studio and live tracks from all of the Live Era artists plus guests. To coincide with the release the Freakz Of Beatz Tour will be happening from the 1st to the 30th of April. Don't miss out on any of these exciting events or your free download.
www.live-era.com

WILDSTYLE

Book publishers Prestel are publishing two books aimed at lovers of graffiti and graffiti culture. 'Brooklyn Street Art' is written by Steven P Harrington and Jaime Rojo and features 150 full colour illustrations. Following on in a series of Street Art books the Brooklyn edition presents a dizzying collection of urban images documenting life in one of birthplaces of the art form.

'Piecebook – The Secret Drawings of Graffiti Writers' is a novel creation featuring selections from actual black books of writers, used to perfect and share their work. Images not normally intended for public from 'seed' artists such as Zephyr, Dondi, Daze, CRASH, Lady Pink, T-Kid, CAP and Ghost are all found in this unique collection. The book is co-authored by the founder of Ego Trip magazine, Sacha Jenkins.



SOUTH WEST DNB AWARDS – THE RESULTS

Held in Newquay at the Barracuda Club the South West DNB Awards give credit to artists and promotions based in the South West region of England. Over 1,200 people witnessed the second annual event where up-and-coming Cornish DJ, Klimax was voted Best D'n'B DJ in the region. Over 10,000 votes were cast across the ten categories representing the opinions of the whole area. Best National DJ was Andy C, who repeated last years win, best National MC was Skibadee, who came in person to collect the award, Best Producer went to High Contrast, closely followed by Pendulum & TC. Script MC defended his title as Best South West MC, whilst Exeter's regular night Rinseout also retained their title of Best Night. Best One-Off Event went to Slammin Vinyl's Westfest held at the Royal & Bath Showground and the Best Record Shop was Plymouth's Bigga Records.

TIME TO GET EVEN
7Even is a new dubstep label coming straight out of France and run by Nantes' dubsteppa Greg G. Greg has taken time out from running 'Basement', the most successful dubstep night in Paris, to launch the label with two tracks from internationally celebrated artist Likhan'. 'Terre' and 'Uwill' are out at the start of March. www.myspace.com/gregg112

INNERGROUND SCHEDULE
Out now on Innerground is the Random Movement EP featuring 'Her Song', 'The Things You Do', 'Psychedelic Drainpipe' and 'A Good Start is Saying No.' Out in March is an EP from Marky and Makoto, collaborating on four tracks, including 'Long Distance', 'Impulse', 'Secret Place' and 'Get To This'. April will see the arrival of 'Arsenic' and 'Finola' from Seba & Krazy, and May will see Vice Versa's 'She's The One' coupled with 'So Far Away' by Drumagick. In the following months, expect to see new tracks from Utah Jazz, Soulmatic, Marky, Makoto, Sonic and Random Movement.

SOCIALISM
As Tony Benn would say, 'Let's talk about Socialism'. After being banished from New Labour by Blair, Socialism has turned into an event hosted at South London's Digital nightclub on 11th March. Featuring sets from Sappo,Baron, MC Shabba D, Rage and Fatman D, ladies are free before 11.30pm to encourage early voting.

THE VINYL TOUCH
Vinyl Touch are hosting their next party on April 4th at the Rhythm Factory in London. The event is a big fat breaks bonanza featuring a hefty line-up of The Freestylers, Far Too Loud (Breakspoll winners 'Best new Single'), Shut Up and Dance, and many more.

SUBBASS FM
Internet TV and radio station Subbass FM are celebrating their first birthday on March 15th. Started as a hobby, just ten months of streaming live audio and video has produced up to 4,000 visitors a month and three successful events. Catering for D&B, breakz and old skool, the station has 40+ regular DJs. Get involved at www.subbassfm.com

SON OF THE DANCE
The creators of Moondance have unveiled their latest concoction, Son Of Dance, an event at The seOne Complex in London on Saturday 15th March. Son Of Dance is a 100% D&B rave taking place across the four cavernous rooms of seOne. Dedicated to featuring the whole spectrum without snobbery or prejudice, the event features Mampi Swift, Simon Bassline Smith, Sub Focus, Hype, Andy C, Shy FX, Goldie, Commix, Randall, Kenny Ken, Dr. S Gachet, Nicky Blackmarket and is hosted by Eksman, GQ, Stamina and Fearless. Tickets from all usual online outlets including, www.ticketweb.co.uk and www.clubtickets.co.uk.

CALLING ALL THE STEPPAZ
Friday 7th March is the date for Steppaz Convention – Part 2 at Audio in Brighton. Dedicated to the golden era of '95-'98, this event will feature Doc Scott, MC Fearless, and The Pressure Kru, alongside Darrison and MC Matrix. www.steppazconvention.com

DEEPER
Hailing from Brighton, Spectrasoul are an act who've seen attention from Shogun, Horions and Nu:Directions. Their latest release appears on Deep Soul Music with the tracks 'Down Town Chicago' and 'The Weakness'. Next up on Deep Soul are two tracks from Zyon Base, 'City of the Red Night' and 'Tombstone Blues.' DSM have repressed their back catalogue recently and all previous releases are available on MP3. www.go-deep.co.uk

YAHALEEL
D&B artist Yahaleel has just released his first CD on Trip Marks The Hop. 'Opus X (The Tenth Mind) can be heard in part at www.myspace.com/yahaleelmusic.

CONTROLLING THE BLOCK
Lovers of heavy bass will be excited to hear that dubstep legends Distance and Scuba are helping to bring the Bournemouth scene up a few notches by performing at the event Bloc Control on Fri 28th March. Visit www.myspace.com/bloc_control

NOKIA: MEET LDN

To coincide with the launch of their brand new space-age store on Regent Street, London, Nokia have designed the Meet London exhibition to show you around the great city, through the eyes and images of some high profile residents. Dizzee Rascal, Darren Bent, Jaime Winstone and Rankin are on board to showcase their portraits at the new store and online, while the general public are encouraged to upload their own personal links to build the exhibition into one massive gallery. More info here: **www.meet-your-city.com**

WANT RESPECT?

According to Government research, almost half of British teens say people who do not use condoms are irresponsible, four in ten say its too risky not to, yet many still don't use protection. The findings published by Want Respect? Use a Condom are that drink, drugs and late-nights are blamed by teens as reasons for not playing it safe.

The number one response was not thinking about the consequences and the second was lack of available condoms at parties. Other reasons for not wrapping up included being pressured by a partner and being under the influence of drugs. 3 in 4 teenage mothers say their pregnancy was unplanned, a stark reminder of the real consequences. The message from the campaign to teens is 'Respect yourself and your partner. Taking control now will mean fewer regrets after the event!'

For more information on condoms, sexual health, how to protect yourself from STI's and to find your nearest GUM Clinic **visit www.condomessentialwear.co.uk** or call the free and confidential Sexual Health helpline **0800 567 123.** Textphone (for people with hearing difficulties) **0800 521 361.** **www.myspace.com/wantrespect**

EPIDEMIK

Epidemik's next event finds them at The Ministry Of Sound in London. On Good Friday (21st March), the bank holiday weekend can be started in style with this bonanza of an event. Highlights include 'The Jilted Generation' a fully live Prodigy tribute band (yes, really), The Ratpack, Slipmatt, Shimano, Billy Bunter, MC Charlie B, Mickey Finn, Darren Jay, Shut Up & Dance, Ellis Dee and The Ragga Twins. Early bird tickets at just £5 can be found at: **www.epidemik.com**

REAL SOUL

Bristol music lovers feeling raved out should check out Go, Go Children!, the new night focussing on 60s soul, original R&B and beat, with DJs John Stapleton, Dean and the amazing My Friend Jack. Held every third Friday of the month at The Avon Combined Services Club, this is a chance to get a serious groove on.

GLOBAL SHAKERS

The m-Atome French camp has been very active over the last few months, releasing a lot of tracks and to a good quality. The 13th release is one for the tech crowd, and features the tunes 'Junked Up' and 'Run' from Regula, who is one half of the production outfit, Bad Robot. This will be followed by a Kemal and Dresden remix of Naab's 'Tamgha Nouchen', backed by the Kantyze remix of 'Queen by Night' by Nphect and Disply. Future tuneage will come from Axiom, Chris Su and Kantyze. Meanwhile, the digital side of the label continues to focus on new talent from the likes of Ukranian Histibe, whose new release is out now on DigitalTunes.net

ALI THIEVEZ

Hip-hop heads will revel in the fact that Underverse Music have decided to release 'Ali Thievez Presents – Slum Lordz' with a bonus album from Bomb Skwad 'Mic-Fight', all completely free online. Quality UK production. Go to www.myspace.com/underversemusic for info on how to get hold of the tunes.

NEXT JUNCTION

Junction 11 add to their growing discography with a new release from System Shock Recordings head honcho, Callide. After getting tracks out on labels like XS Recordings, Source, and Deadly Records, as well as his own imprint, 'City of Angels' and 'No Sound Test' are due out in March. Following this on Junction 11 will be a pair of tunes from a new producer, hotly tipped for 2008, Cabbie. www.myspace.com/junction11

YARUS RUSH

Digital label Yarus Records, now onto the 11th release, has two tracks from DJ Yarus with strong South American flavours in the D&B mix. 'Pablo Korumbo' comes from a collaboration with MC Timich, and 'Sabronsa' was already made by Colombian DJ, Dr Harvey with vocals from Petrona Martinez, before getting the Yarus remix treatment. Download from www.yarusrecords.com

MIAMI HOUSE

As the Miami Winter Music Conference draws near, we've received info about a massive house event taking place on 28th March at the prestigious Opium Club hosted by UK promoters MN2S. The huge line-up includes Fedde Le Grand, Todd Terry, Joey Negro, Bodyrox, Kurd Maverick, Joe T Vanelli, Ian Pooley, George Morel, John Julius Knight, Eddie Thoenick, Jamie Lewis, Jay-J, Jon Cutler, Brian Tappert, Antoine Clamaran and many more.

NEED TO KNOW

To help combat the ever rising knife crime involving young people in the UK, the Metropolitan Police has launched a new campaign. Their new online video and game emphasise the point that carrying and knife is, 'Not a good look'. Although the video has a humorous tone, the message behind the motto is deadly serious. Research proves the obvious, that those involved with knives end up damaging their lives either tragically, or by being arrested and jailed. Higher penalties and more regulations concerning the sale of knives mean that carrying one is definitely a bad idea. Visit the website www.notagoodalook.org

SUBSISTENCE

Subsistence drop the second release with 'Kings of the Warehouse' from The Dying Punks. Members of The Dying Punks are Raiden and Dean Rodell and Propaganda features in the EP. Tracks on the release are 'Love Your Robots', 'Vietnam Never Happened', 'Wednesday Wake' and 'Headhunter' the Propaganda remix.

EASILY DONE

KG's debut release on Easy Records is about to drop, featuring the tracks 'Apocalypto' and 'Remain Where You Are'. Another debut producer is also scheduled, this time the new artist is Levela and the 'Jungle Story' album is coming out accompanied by a mix from America's hot talent, DJ Shortee.

word on the streets

SAY IT LOUD...

It was a big day for the UK music scene when some of the biggest names of grime and hip hop came together in support of the tune 'Black Boys Remix'. The original video has already seen heavy rotation on all the major music channels and the remix is set to be a classic piece of British music video history.

The original track caught the imagination of a nation in turmoil. With reports of shootings and stabbings popping up, on what seemed to be every other news bulletin and with the media continually focusing on the lack of role models in certain communities, it felt that the nation's inner city youth needed a reminder that they had a number of positive figureheads they could look to.

Bashy explains what he set out to achieve, "I wanted to pay tribute and congratulate a lot of the achievers in our community. The media try and suggest that we don't have role models, but there's loads and I've put some of them on this track".

The remix has been played on all stations and features Akala, Ms Dynamite, Ty, Sincere, Scorcer, Wretch 32, Narstie, Bigz, Chipmunk, Reggie Yates, Swiss, J2K, Mike GLC, Styla, Tinee, Tempah & JaJa. Not content with getting all these artists in the booth, Bashy managed to persuade them all to come down to appear in the ground breaking remix video shot down in Deptford South East London.

If that wasn't enough he also reached out to Skinny Man, Nolay & Skepta who wrote exclusive new verses for the track. The special edition box set also features interviews with Ras Kwame, Mega Man, Blak Twang, Twin B and many more.

LRG: BRAND OF CHOICE

LRG (or Lifted Research Group) has long been the favourite clothing brand for many drum and bass, hip hop and underground music heads. Legendary artists like Jazzy Jeff, Masters At Work and Kayne West are all official LRG supporters with the UK represented by the likes of Tonn Piper and Broke'n'English. Whether it's a case of rocking their dapper jeans, exclusive tees or skatewear this is a brand that's looking big in every sense for 2008.

By staying true to their original ethic of "underground inventive, overground effective," and by only using selected stockists the label isn't one that's been over-exposed and with high profile people from the worlds of snowboarding, boxing, film and music all on board, plus some exciting cross-branding with the likes of T Mobile, LRG is a brand that's hot property.

Get more info at: www.l-r-g.com or head to your nearest stockists, www.exit.uk.com and www.footasylum.com in the north and Mash in London.

DANGER MOUSE!

I used to love Dangermouse; Penfold was sick as well... sorry, wrong Mouse! Let's start again. Hailed as one of the most innovative producers of our time Danger Mouse has taken the world by storm. Having a hand in releases for Gnarls Barkley, Danger Doom, Gorillaz, 'The Grey Album' and cult classic 'Ghetto Pop Life', where he teamed up with NYC based rapper Jemini.

Well, by the looks of it 2008 is more of the same as he is currently adding a further three releases to his already impressive body of work. First up is 'The Blue God' album in which he has worked along side chanteuse Martina Topley-Bird to create what is already being described as bewitching piece of work. Martina is already well regarded for her work with Tricky and was short-listed for the Mercury Music Prize for her solo debut album 'Quixotic'. Keep an ear open for the forthcoming single 'Carnies' to get a flavour of what to expect.

Next up to the plate is his collaboration on The Shortwave Set's forthcoming second album where we find Danger Mouse in the director's chair with another of his favourite UK artists. Finally to end where all good trilogy's should (on a high note) we see the welcome return of Gnarls Barkley. Word has it that in recent months Danger Mouse and Cee-Lo have been holed up in a secret studio location near Atlanta creating the sequel to the multi-platinum 'St Elsewhere'. The new album's title and release date will soon be revealed. You have been warned!

D&B IN DUBLIN

OneSevenFour is a D&B night launched in Dublin's Pod Club in January this year. The April Event, the fifth, features Soviet's resident Aaron Jay playing dubs from his label, Influence Records and support from Bonz and Julie D.

LOVE & BEYOND

In a world of one track releases on digital download, Jay Haze has gone back to roots and produced an artist album that's produced a rare and complete unified project. Spanning two CDs or LPs, this is some very deep innovative 21st century soul music. The CD and LP versions have completely different tracks to each other, as is the nature of Jay's unconventional style and its released on Tuning Spork at the end of April.

CHEW THE FAT – FUNDRAISER

Paul 'Trouble' Arnold is the founder of 'Chew The Fat!', a widely successful club night and record label. Having been recently diagnosed with leukaemia, a charity has been set up to help Paul in his fight against cancer. The industry has pitched in to create one of the biggest line-ups ever seen in London. A B2B battle will see The Plump DJs Vs Stanton Warriors, Krafty Kutz Vs Freestylers (tbc), Meat Katie Vs Evil Nine, Soul of Man Vs Atomic Hooligan, Rennie Pilgrim (tbc) Vs JDs, Tayo Vs Baobinga and Rogue Element Vs Tom Real. The event will take place at The End on 9th April.

SOULFUL NEWWAVE

Newwave is hosted at an intimate club, Plan B in Brixton. Newwave has been playing soulful D&B in Brixton since November 2007, and with artists like Fabio, Mutt, Alex Perez, Lynx and Stamina MC, the deep and soulful vibes are in effect. With plenty more to come in 2008, Newwave can be found on the last Friday of every month at Plan B.

CZECH IT!

Czech D&B has progressed well in recent years. 'Back In My Mind 3' is a compilation of D&B from the Czech Republic, including tracks from Mic, Ultima C, Denius, Emphonic, Dephzac & Goro, No Money & MC Coppa, Hemaglobin, Danoo, Brooklyn and Cocoman. To get the CD for free when purchasing an item of clothing visit www.badpoint.eu

WWW.DNBSTATIONS.CO.UK

DnBStations.co.uk has been created by the people behind dnb4essex.co.uk and is a unique site offering a portal to a massive range of D&B radio stations from across the globe. The site provides a Flash based pop-up media player to navigate through all the stations. All the info is there in the same player whichever stream you're listening to. The site also features a promo section which keeps DJs up to date with all the latest 12" promos released each week and info about forthcoming events.

GETTING GRIDDLED

Grid Recordings have a busy schedule planned for 2008. The second instalment of 2008 is a release from Twisted Individual, who characteristically lowers the tone with 'Sh*t don't Stink' and 'Back Up Plan.' Not content with that, Twisted has a tune that is 'Fat Like Your Mum' alongside 'Dog Town' from DJ Silver. Following this will be releases from Zen, Vital Elements and an EP from Heist. Zen's massive 'Hovercraft' will be included in these tracks. Over on Zombie Records is the first release from Special Patrol Group, and 'Particle Beam' and 'Supernova' have received good support from the industry. Also in March is a release from Vital Elements and some jump-up action from Estonian trio Mutated Forms.

SOULPHICTION

Following his 2006 album, 'State of Euphoria', Soulphiction returns with a new album on Sonar Kollektiv. 'Do You Overstand?' features collaborations with vocalist Suzana Rozkosny on the track 'Chevy Estate' and with bassist Marcin Oz on the track 'Prison Song'. It's deep electronic music of the sort of standard you come to expect from the ever-impressive Sonar Kollektiv label. ATM have been rotating this on our stereo since the day it rolled up on our doorstep and in particular we can't get enough of the intoxicating 'Ghana Wadada' feat. Phlegmatic. www.sonarkollektiv.com

guest column

UP CLOSE & PERSONAL WITH B TRAITS

I must have been about 12 when I first heard Souls of Mischief's '93 'Till Infinity' and discovered my love for hip hop and dance music. In junior high I carried my little ghetto blaster with me everywhere and if you wanted to hear it, I had it. Everybody was havin' me make mix tapes for their birthday parties, but I never knew it would lead to something bigger.

I looked at that music as being the most important part of B-Boyin' and B-Girlin'. My girl, Amanda Rude and I always hit up hip hop parties where our favorite local DJ, Bryx, was always layin' down the oldest and latest, but it wasn't until he let his boys Julian & Willie on the decks to drop some old Prisoners of Technology that I discovered jungle. I will never forget watching Mat The Alien perform as he dropped Shy FX & T.Power's 'Shake Ur Body' to close his set. My crew and I started rollin' out to all night rave parties regularly as I got more and more into that electronic and d'n'b sound. In discovering new genres we tried to get involved with it as much as we could, makin' our own music, music videos and rhyming over our favorite tracks.

It wasn't until I was 16 when I first touched a pair of turntables. At the time I was consumed in B-Girlin', dance was all I wanted to do. I met this fly DJ boy who was a staple at any party, with his warping speed garage and funky house, or slap funk as we called it. He claimed he had seen my moves on the dance floor and sincerely wanted a lesson. And so began my foray into DJing as we swapped skills. I picked up beatmatching quickly and before I knew it I was runnin' a full speed garage mix! But SG was not entirely what I wanted to play so I began buying my own hip hop records eventually leading to my first d'n'b record, Dillinja's, 'Live or Die'. D'n'b seemed to really stick with me; I couldn't get enough of it. I began spending most of my time on the decks, and soon found myself playing at all the house parties during senior high school. I was steady B-Girlin' as always, but I couldn't deny my love affair.

When I got to Vancouver after graduating in 2004, I spent most of my time in record shops expanding my ever growing d'n'b collection, chatting with the local DJs, and ultimately making fast friends with d'n'b hero, DJ Dabbler. As I rooted myself in the scene, I was offered my first gig in Van at Sunday Sessions at the Vibes Lounge. My first opportunity opening for an international artist was in Whistler at the weekly night Foundation Tuesdays hosted by JnB Productions for DJ Rap. Soon after I opened for Kenny Ken, he actually recorded my live set, helping me create my first live mix CD.

I ended up opening for the World of Drum & Bass tour a few months later where I met DJ SS. Unexpectedly, SS called me up and asked if I'd be interested in DJing an all girl stage at the Sundance Music Festival in Tallinn, Estonia in July 2005. Estonia was an amazing, mind opening experience. The people were very different from the d'n'b heads back home. After Estonia, we flew back to London where I also got a chance to play at the Mixologists' and Killa Kela's Spit Kingdom night at Herbal.

The next time I heard from SS, he introduced me to his newly signed artist, Kay. With Kay's vocals and my DJing experience we figured we'd make a great performing act. SS came up with the name LTC (Ladies Take Control) and he gave us a chance to earn our stripes with a few dates on the WODNB tour 2006. We preformed at the LA show, How Sweet It Is at the Shrine Auditorium and the legendary WOD&B party in Miami during WMC. The tour dates went really well, and SS decided to take us on our own tour in the summer of 2006. The tour kicked in Seattle. We then flew to L.A.'s Bassrush Summer Sessions at the Vanguard and from there, to San Francisco where we played at Compression at Temple. Compression crew knows how to do it proper, with such style and grace. The Sundance Music Festival in Estonia was glad to have me back to rep the female stage, only this time I had the pleasure of bringing Miss Kay along with me. The tour brought us to the UK where we had a chance to play at Run at Native in Bristol and Movement at Bar Rumba in London. I really loved Movement, I had heard so much about the night for years and it was an honor to finally be a part of it.

That summer, we got the opportunity to go to Russia. It's truly amazing that so many young aspiring minds came together for our music. Thinking our tour couldn't get any better we headed off to Germany. The first place we hit was Deepsoul at Schwanensee in Braunschweig for Judge D. On one of the hottest days of summer, with no AC! Everybody was drenched and the sweat was dripping off the ceiling, my records were so wet and slippery my fingers couldn't grasp a cue. Nonetheless that atmosphere created a fuckin' crazy vibe! The next night we drove to Bremen, to play for promoter Dirk at his own Ting! Club. I met people I will never forget and will probably be friends with for the rest of my life.

That following winter, Dirk had me back to play at his renowned NYE event Kings Of The Jungle where I had the pleasure of officially meeting Shy FX for the first time. I had actually found the nerve to hand him a mix CD and although polite, I could tell he wasn't at all interested in taking the time to have a listen. DJ SS offered Kay and I another spot on the World of DNB tour for 2007 and we eagerly accepted. That year the tour brought us back to St. Petersburg, Russia and from the experience we previously had we were more than excited to get back on that stage. We got to the venue and it was a massive stadium. The entire place was packed at 9:30pm! I was blown away, never had I imagined I'd be playin' in a venue holding over 10,000 people.

The rest of the tour took us back to North America where we played all over Canada and the USA. Shy FX was accompanying us in Whistler, Vancouver, Miami, San Fransisco and LA, I remember Shy coming out early to catch my set, not knowing he was doin' his homework and watchin closely. He commented on my style and stage presence and claimed I was refreshing compared to the boys lookin' like they didn't really want to be there. He asked me if I was making any beats, I told him I had been working on a few things but no way did I have the confidence to show him anything.

After the tour I went back home to Canada and actually ended up sending Shy a few vibes over AIM. I got a phone call a few days later and he offered me a spot on his label Digital Soundboy. He said he loved my demos and DJ'ing skills and I'd be a good look for the camp. I am truly honored to be apart of DSB as the first Digital Sound Girl. For those of ya that haven't heard it, my latest DSB mix featuring MC GQ is hosted on Drum & Bass Arena. This is my first mix that has been promoted to the world, but I promise there are many more to come. This year, with DSB behind me, I plan to release my first tune as well as have the opportunity to tour the UK and the rest of the world a lot more. I'm really looking forward to the Digital Soundboy tour dates, DNBARENA parties and of course all the established d'n'b nights I haven't had the chance to play at yet such as The End and Fabric.

www.djbtraits.com
www.digitalsoundboy.com
www.myspace.com/djbtraits

DJ DIE
ATM COVER CD

words: Ben Wilmot

It's a serious business, drum and bass, and rightly so. You might certainly expect a veteran like DJ Die, whose contributions helped to give birth to the music as well as nurse it through its first 15 years, to be one of those earnest ambassadors for the scene, desperate to maintain its artistic purity and about as likely to crack a joke as break into a chorus from The Sound Of Music.

You couldn't be more wrong. At least, we find this key player from the Bristol massive in jovial mood when we collar him to talk about his ATM cover mix CD. "It's all aboard Clear Skyz airlines for a trip to outer space," he laughs. "You'd better buckle up because there might be some turbulence! Here's your complimentary bag of peanuts – passengers are entitled to one free drink but if you want champagne you'll have to get your cash card out!"

Take his response when we ask whether his Clear Skyz label, currently up to release three, is considering releasing any album projects. "Well, I was thinking of putting a Clear Skyz album together," he sniggers before adding - about the exclusive-packed ATM mix CD - "but I think I've just given it all away!"

Anyone who has followed almost any era of drum and bass will know Die's name. From those early collaborations with Roni Size like 'Music Box', included here in a new speedier '08 version from Sigma, to the subsequent waves of his solo material, he's played a pivotal part in the music's progress all along. As part of the Reprazent crew he won mainstream acceptance and the Mercury Music Prize. As part of the Full Cycle crew the Bristol-based producer also earned a place in the heart of the underground with year after year of quality dancefloor beat science. But now Die is entering a new part of his rich career. He won't, he reveals, be joining the reformed Reprazent, preferring to concentrate on the fledgling Clear Skyz the label, not forgetting the soon-to-be-launched club night of the same name.

"We did a launch party at Christmas for the launch of the label with Fabio and Clipz," he says, "but now I'm looking at doing something more regular. We've found a brand new club we want to do it in called Platform One in Bristol, and we're getting Lemon D to do a classic Valve set on the 20th March. It'll be good to get some of the top boys down here for it."

Meanwhile, teaming up with Clipz and Ben Westbeech - whose recent album Die co-produced a third of, on the label's first two releases - Clear Skyz already has a close family feel. It's a Bristol thing, you understand. His links with the city's new generation of producers has lead to the very exciting prospect of him making tunes with Break and he called in a favour to secure MC Jakes for microphone duties on our mix as well as borrow a track from Distorted Minds' Stereotype label. When, for instance, we say we've heard that former No-U-Turn soldier Fierce has moved to Bristol, naturally enough Die replies: "Oh yeah, he's round here now. He only lives up the road."

Arguably more than any other enclave of D&B creativity, the Bristol scene has always revolved around collaborations; a tradition which the Clear Skyz output so far indicates is set to continue. Die reckons that one of the many things Bristol has going for it is the ease with which jamming and experimenting with musicians like Westbeech can be achieved. "It's very inspiring to get him in and see what we come up with. Everyone round here has really wide taste," he says, "I think it comes from being part of the rave scene, which always was diverse."

Ever cheery, Die insists that a large-sized big up go out to everyone involved in the mix, recorded live during the daytime session in his Bristol studio, with special thanks going out to Jakes for his MC input. In many ways it's business as usual, in others it's the start of a new era. For the ever modest Die, it's just a case of carrying on doing what he loves most. "I just want to continue my journey," he says by way of conclusion, "and continue representing the music." It's a sentiment we at ATM can only echo.

ATM ISSUE 76 COVER CD TRACKLISTING
THE MIX – IN DIE'S WORDS

INTRO
CLEAR SKYZ SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS FEAT. MISS G
"Self explanatory really – you'll hear, anyway."

01. DIE & BREAK
UNTITLED – DUB
"A little roller we're still working on, but it seemed to roll with the mix."

02. BASSFACE SASHA
INTANATIONAL SOUND (DIE EDIT) - STEREOTYPE
"Coming on Stereotype, which is a division of Distorted Minds' D-Style. He's from Manheim in Germany, and this track is like a trip back to real rolling jungle."

03. CUBIST
MEMORY LAPSE – DUB
"He's from Melbourne, Australia, and this track has a wicked tone b-line."

04. DIE & CLIPZ
BACK INSIDE - CLEAR SKYZ
"Something upfront from the next release. I remember playing it in Barcelona last year. In fact I think it's been around for about a year and a half. It goes through three or four styles in the first minute! There's also a tease of my track 'Flashpoint' in there, which is a 'Rollerball'-esque type thing that's not quite finished yet."

05. KUBIKS
FORGOTTEN LANDS - DUB
"There's something about the strings on this. I like tracks like this that take you on a deeper journey."

06. DIE & CLIPZ
GOOD OLD DAYS - FULL CYCLE
"The B-side to 'Black Doves' on Full Cycle. What's my idea of the 'Good Old Days'? Skateboarding, aged 17, in the Dame Emily skate park in Bristol."

07. RONI SIZE & DIE
MUSIC BOX (SIGMA REMIX) - DUB
"I'm going to sell this as a vinyl-only release through the website. Sigma did a bit of a cheeky one and took the samples off the record, but I liked what they did. The original was 155bpm so it did need updating."

08. DIE
SLOW BURN - CLEAR SKYZ
"Stick that in your pipe and smoke it!"

09. A SIDES
LUSTROUS - SPEARHEAD
"A little funked up thing, which samples Bob James for that funk/rare groove vibe. A-Sides is one of the hardest working DJs around – whenever I speak to him he's in Australia or New Zealand or Japan or America!"

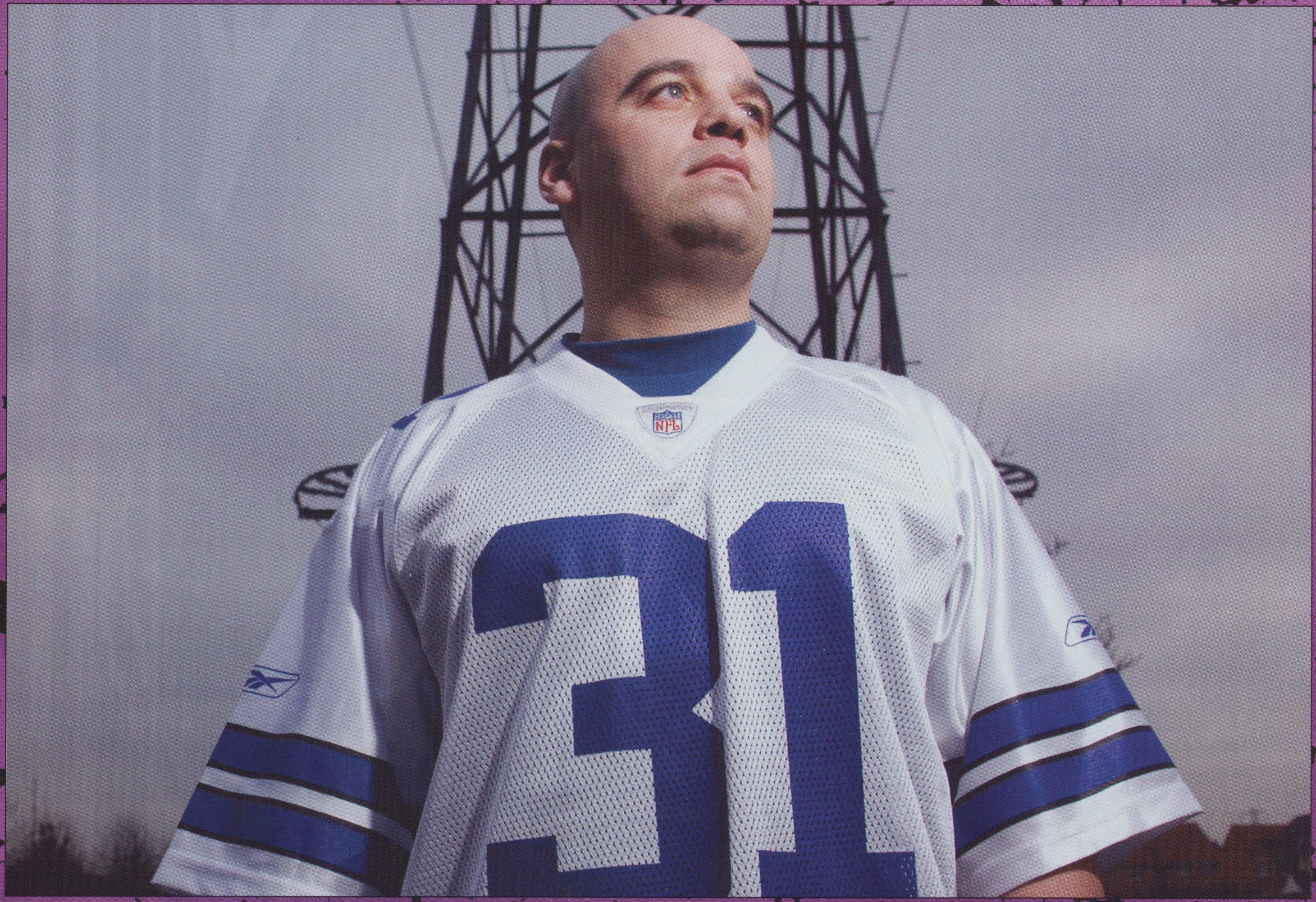
10. DIE FEAT. BEN WESTBEECH
THE REASONS WHY - CLEAR SKYZ
"Another sort of exclusive, at least he's done some extra vocals on this version. I want to hear this one in a field, swaying to the beat."

11. HEIST
BOOKEM - DUB
"The drums are phat and there's a great bit-crunched bassline, plus that 'Bookem Danno' sample that LTJ Bukem had on his very early studio tapes, although I don't think Heist knew that when he used it on this tune. It's from some old cop show. Was it Kojak? Could have been but I'm not sure. (Ed: It was Hawaii Five O)."

12. DIE
INDIAN SUMMER - CLEAR SKYZ
"It's just a very quick sneak preview of something with a kind of Bollywood meets drum and bass flavour, that'll be coming soon."

D&B hall of fame

words: Ben Willmott pic: Zen Inoya



ATM Hall Of Fame 005: DOC SCOTT

Drum and bass is generally a pretty prolific business. Go onto a website like discogs.com and check out the discography of Roni Size, Photek or Dillinja, and you'll be greeted by a massive list of productions and remixes that literally stretches for pages. Every month there are big new tracks, naturally, but the reputations of the scene's biggest names are usually forged by the sheer weight of great tunes they've made.

Of course there's always an exception to the rule, and that exception is Doc Scott. At times during the Coventry-based DJ / producer's lengthy career, the gaps between his releases are measured in years rather than months. But when they have dropped, tracks like 'Shadow Boxing', 'Swarm', 'Liquid Fingers' and the various updates of his 'Drumz' anthem, have all left a massive stylistic impact on the music. Scott even goes as far as admitting that sometimes such tunes are a comment on whatever is happening in the scene at the time – a comment that's all the more powerful because of the fact they're so rare.

"That's true of a couple of them anyway," he says. "It was definitely a statement to put out vocal tunes like 'Liquid Fingers' and 'How You Make Me Feel' by Marcus Intalex & ST Files at the same time, because drum and bass at the time (1999) was all about this dark, aggressive Bad Company-type sound. There have been a lot more vocal tunes out since then."

Given that, it says something of Scott's versatility that he's also known for serving up the evergreen techstep classic, 'Shadow Boxing', in 1996. With its haunted chords, streamroller beat and kung fu vocal samples, it's an instantly recognisable exercise in simplicity, almost the ultimate roller.

"That was made when everyone was obsessed with clever edits – everything had to have an edit on it at the time," he laughs, "I wanted to show you could do something really simple and still make it good."

However, Scott isn't a compulsive inhabitant of the studio, preferring to see himself as a DJ (he can count the likes of Marcus Intalex, Commix and a host of others as life-long admirers of his sets). "I'm a DJ who occasionally puts out productions," he insists, although adding that he was hoping the yawning six year gap that preceded the release of 'End Of The Beginning' EP wouldn't be repeated. One of the EP's highlights was '9507', the latest instalment in possibly the most remixed D&B track of all time. The history of the tune reads like the story of drum and bass itself. With 4 Hero first signing the dark breakbeat workout 'Here Come The Drums' and a subsequent remix for their Reinforced label, having been impressed by Scott's hardcore 'Surgery' track and 'NHS' EP's. Through them he started making music with Goldie, so when the Metalheadz label was formed it was natural that the new era should be heralded in by 'VIP Drumz', the twelve inch that was its first ever release. This journalist can still remember hearing Randall bringing the house down by playing it at the Forum in Kentish Town, just before Goldie took to the stage for his very first live set.

In typical contrary Scott style, the next version, 'Drumz 95' (again on Metalheadz), couldn't have been more different. Where its predecessor felt like it had used every churning, filtered breakbreak under the sun, the '95 update was a relentlessly upright roller with just one almighty beat.

"'Drumz' is more of a concept than a track," says Scott, "which is why I suppose I can revisit it every now and again. All you really need is that sample saying 'here come the drums' and some beats! The most recent version just happened because I loaded up all the samples from all the different versions and started playing around with them."

So, when can we expect another? "Perhaps I might consider doing a 'Drumz 2010'" he replies, "that seems about right!"

He says he feels constantly privileged to be able to travel abroad and visit other countries to DJ. He's a club DJ rather than a rave DJ, he says too, preferring the longer sets in Europe to the tightly squeezed bills of many events in the UK. "It's great when you go to somewhere like Berlin," he illustrates, "and they say 'OK, you're on at 2am, play as long as you like." He loves the travel, but is also always happy to return to Coventry, where family life and being able to turn his phone off and disappear on his mountain bike for an hour or two keep him grounded.

The income from DJing also takes a certain amount of pressure off his label 31 Records, meaning he doesn't have to put out anything but the very finest music – or, if none of that happens to be turning up, anything at all. Although that has been the case at times in the past, he's recently been lapping up productions from all over the world via AIM and has plans for a 31 album featuring everyone from the biggest names in the business to newcomers from Germany and New Zealand. That's in addition to the label's catalogue now being available for download through site www.abunchofcuts.com, a new venture between Scott, Klute, Soul:R and D-Bridge.

Not that breaking international acts is a new thing for him either. It was, after all, Doc Scott's A&R ears that picked up on a certain Pendulum literally before anyone else. "That was funny," he says of 'Vault', the massive first Pendulum track that appeared on volume three of the 'King Of The Rollers' EP series. "I would tell people it was three guys from Australia," he says, "and they would say 'no come on, who is it really?!'"

www.myspace.com/31docscott

DIZZEE RASCAL

BOY DONE GOOD

words: Mark O'Donnell picture: Leon Csernohlavek

"One thing I've learnt, nothing comes for free. No one owes you nothing in this world, man. If you don't go out their and take it, you'll be sat a long time waiting." This quote isn't Tony Montana from Scarface, but from the gifted mouth of Dizzee Rascal. In a world where people expect instant success and crave fame without wanting to put the graft in, this one quote from Dizzee sums up his streetwise mentality and on-the-ball business hustle that's turned him from grime boy wonder into one of the biggest artists in the UK, period.

One day while scanning an internet forum, ATM came across a link to a recorded show from the legendary station, Kool FM. Along with the usual suspects: Skibadee, Fun and Ruffstuff, was none other than Dizzee Rascal. Intrigued to find out how the Bow-born-and-raised rapper sounded over drum and bass, we downloaded the clip and were impressed with his flow over classics like 'Dark Soldier' and 'Special Request'.

"Drum and bass is a part of me," explains Dizzee. "When I was a kid, originally I wanted to be a big jungle DJ; I weren't even a rapper or nothing." This was when he was 10 or 11, getting his drum and bass fix by sneaking into house parties round his local area and through pirate radio. So you had some decks? "Yeah I had some turntables; I had a few different ones. I started off with some shitty wooden ones with no pitch control, using elastic bands to make 'em more like Technics," he says in unmistakable accent.

On the Kool FM show he rubbed shoulders with one of his major inspirations from back in the day, D Double E. "When I was into drum and bass as a kid he was the MC I listened to, him and Riddles, Wiley, Rico, they all started off doing jungle." It was a long time coming for UK rappers to be comfortable using their own accents and not trying to copy what their American brothers were doing and jungle MCs played a big part. This is something not lost on the Rascal. "Jungle MCs made me feel like it was OK to sound like myself, I still listened to American MCs, I just didn't think I had to sound like them."

To this day his love of classic jungle is as strong as ever, he name checks Trend's '2 Degrees' and Die's 'Clear Skyz' as personal fav's. When he was asked to stand in for Zane Lowe on his Radio One show, Dizzee dropped Shy FX's remix of 'Chopper' amongst tracks as surprisingly diverse as Vanilla Ice's 'Ice Ice Baby' and Guns & Roses 'Welcome To The Jungle'. Of course his link with Shy extends to the track they made together for his third LP 'Maths & English' and there's a few more tracks to come from this hook-up in the future.

Already working on his fourth LP for XL Recordings, Dizzee definitely has the non-stop work ethic needed to stay at the top. Even before he became the public face of grime by winning the Mercury Prize Award for his debut LP, 'Boy In The Corner' (aged just 19) he was a big hit on the underground club circuit with the Sidewinder Best Newcomer Award in 2002 sealing his reputation.

The work ethic extends to his corporate sponsorship deals. Over the last few months ATM has seen Dizzee perform at the Sony Walkman launch with Sugar Hill Gang and at the Nike Supersonic event. Even this particular interview was organised to help support Nokia's Meet London campaign, which sees Dizzee along with footballer Darren Bent and actress Jaime Winstone (daughter of Ray 'I'm the Daddy' Winstone) show people round their native London through the Nokia website and mobile phones. Just as Dizzee's idol, Jay Z has cracked the endorsement jackpot through deals with Nike, Motorola, Rolex, Versace and Range Rover, Dizzee is following in his footsteps by showing that UK rap artists can go out there and win big with the brands. Jigga would be proud. When asked about his various sponsorship deals, Dizzee just breaks into a smile and looks pleased, who wouldn't at the thought of all that money rolling in?

At the Nike Supersonic event as well as dropping his ode to the trainer goliath in the form of 'Bubbles' ("Nike Air Bubbles looking fresh"), he performed for a good hour and a half much to the delight of the young crowd in attendance. Earlier, 1000 of the quickest young runners from around London were invited to take part in the final showcase. Footage was shown of Dizzee competing in the heats, where one rapid little contestant showboated his way in front of the Rascal to the finishing line. On mention of the heat he's quick to show his competitive streak. "I had a chicken burger right before and I wasn't going to run. If I hadn't had it, I might have won. I wasn't prepared." But running and the Olympics are not his calling in life. "I've got a friend who is training for the Olympics and he trains at all mad hours. He's out in the cold and shit." So you'd rather be in your bed? "Yeah, man."

The fact that the Olympics is taking place in East London, where he spent his formative years' bouncing off the concrete, doesn't seem to strike any chords with him. "Everyone's making big deal of it but I don't give a shit personally." He is, however, much more positive on the subject of representing LDN worldwide through his music. "Whatever field you're in, whether sport or whatever, to represent your city and country is the one." These days his home address doesn't carry an E postcode as he's moved out of the area, although he goes back to see family and friends. With areas like Shoreditch and Brick Lane touted as some of the most achingly cool in London by style and fashion magazines, has he noticed the changes? "Definitely down Bethnal Green around Roman Road, it's almost a nice area. There's still crime there, but there's a lot more to it now." Still like every bit of the heaving metropolis, there's crack heads to be found amongst the gentrification and we're not just talking Amy Winehouse and her mates.

When talk moves onto the people he's most enjoyed working with, he throws up something of a curveball by mentioning the likes of The Artic Monkeys and Red Hot Chili Peppers ahead of Ludacris and Justin Timberlake. Taking to the stage at Glastonbury with Artic Monkeys in front of 80,000 people still burns bright in his memory. "There's nothing like seeing that many people laid out in front of you." For someone who prides themselves on looking fresh in their Nike Air's, the moody wellies he had to wear were not part of the game plan. "Fucking hell man, that was shit. I was there for hours. I smoked some weed and I was lean, cold, soggy and I was in a cold portacabin." When Dizzee is told that mere mortals have to camp in the quagmire for days on end, his facial expression says it all: no chance!

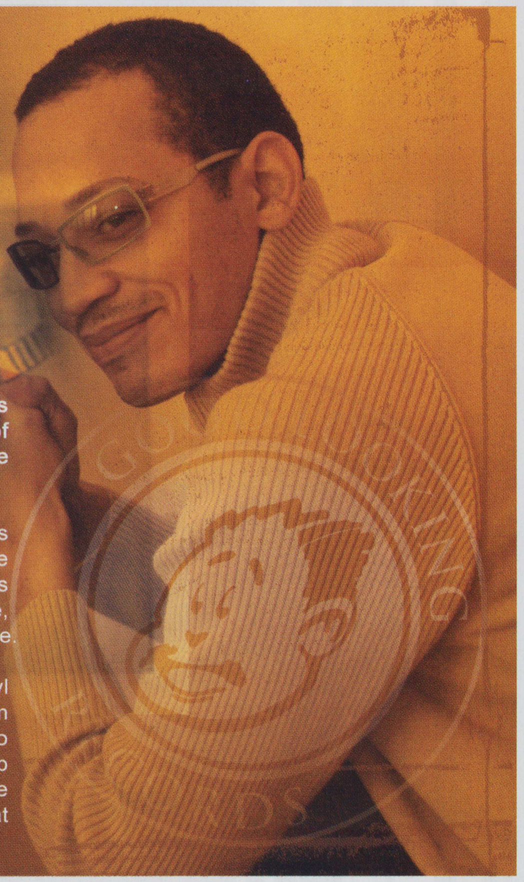
This year he's planning to release The Newham General's LP on his Dirtee Stank label. Set up as a separate enterprise to his XL Recordings deal, he actually released his massive smash 'I Love You' on Stank, before he hooked up with XL. Newham General's comprises of D Double E in grime mode along with Footsie and Monkey. Dizzee is quick to promote their show on Rinse FM and with his weight behind them you'd think they'll get some love and not just from the ghetto streets.

A story we heard about Dizzee recently sums up why he's got such widespread appeal. While playing at the Exit festival in Serbia last year, he was booked to perform on the main stage. With Morrissey due to play the next set, the crowd of Morrissey fans were a tough nut to crack and as Dizzee dropped his opening tracks the signs weren't promising. Flipping things on their head though, he played tracks like Nirvana 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' and soon had the crowd eating out of the palm of his hand. "The Exit Festival surprised me, it was proper, I never imagined myself going to Serbia," he says of the experience.

Seeing Dizzee perform live is a must. His powerhouse tracks like 'Fix Up Look Sharp', 'Flex' and 'Sirens' fuse rock, rave and rap in way that puts his competition in the shade and provide indisputable proof that he's is one the most versatile and exciting performers in the game. "I try to entertain as many people as I can," he reckons, showing that at heart he's a born entertainer.

www.dizzeerascal.com

NEWS UPDATE...



HEY GOOD LOOKING...

LTJ Bukem is a name that needs no introduction in the world of Drum & Bass and beyond, his legendary Good Looking and Looking Good imprints stretched way beyond the boundaries of the D&B world and cemented his place in Dance Music history. So what better way to see the New Year in here at Nu Urban Music than by welcoming Bukem and his labels to the family.

Breaking away from the confines of Jungle music in the early '90s, LTJ Bukem focused his attention on what became known as 'Intelligent' Drum & Bass amongst the hordes of fans across the globe. This new style incorporated musical elements over the sped up funk breaks and 909 bass hits that Jungle had already absorbed and spun them out in a way that had never been heard before, becoming an overnight epidemic that turned Good Looking into a giant of the electronic music scene.

First up will be the long awaited single 'Switch' from LTJ Bukem himself, a welcome return to vinyl from one of the biggest names in the game, backed up on the AA with MC Conrad & Furney 'Drum Toolz' a track that has become a DJ fave over the last few months, making GLR068 a huge return to form for the aesthetically pleasing D&B label. We will also re-release GLR067 Makoto's 'Eastern Dub pt.2' backed up with the incredible remix from DJ Marky which was previously available for a brief time before the demise of Amato Distribution in late 2007. They say it's a matter of opinion, and ours is that it's great to see them back!

OUT NOW
LTJ BUKEM : SWITCH / MC CONRAD & DJ FURNEY : DRUM TOOLS (12" : GLR068)
COMING SOON
APRIL 2008 : Bukem In Session : LTJ Bukem & MC Conrad In Session Live From The Exit Festival (CD & DVD)
MAY 2008 : LTJ Bukem Presents Earth Volume 8 : (CD & 3x12" LP)

ZERO TOLERANCE – CHEAP SHOTS

Zero T made his name crafting beats for a wide selection of D&B's most respected labels, from Subtitles and Soul:R to Bassbin and Innerground. But now Ireland's finest export since Father Ted hooks up with Total Science to drop his long awaited debut LP on their legendary CIA Records. Entitled 'Cheap Shots' and featuring a selection of the finest artists on the block including MC Conrad, Alix Perez, Logistics and Stamina, this album is packed full of goodness for fans of the soulful sound that Zero T has become renowned for. Already the first few tracks to be released to DJs have been slapping up the dance wherever they're dropped and both BBC 1Xtra's Bailey and Crissy Criss have been battering a selection on their shows. Look out for the sampler 12" 'Walk Away' b/w 'The Original R' released soon on CIA and featuring the vocal talents of Steo, while the album itself is set to drop in May with a follow up 12" featuring a Break remix of 'Busy Time' and a brand new track from Zero T & Bailey called 'Robots'... big like fat club!

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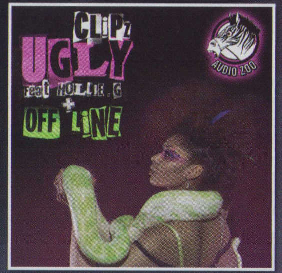
NEW RELEASES...

BLAME
BATCAVE / HARLEM
CHARGE

ATLANTIC CONNECTION
HANGIN' ON / THE FRIGHTENERS
WESTBAY



CLIPZ
UGLY / OFF LINE
AUDIO ZOO

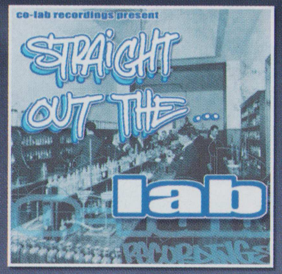
ORIGINAL SIN
DON'T BE SILLY / CHEATER CHEATER
GANJA

TELEMETRIK
MY LIGHT YEAR EP 1
BLACK SUN EMPIRE

BUNGLE
GOOD TIMES / WHERE I AM
LIQWEED GANJA

FRICTION & NU BALANCE
ROBOCOP (TAXMAN REMIX)
PLAYAZ

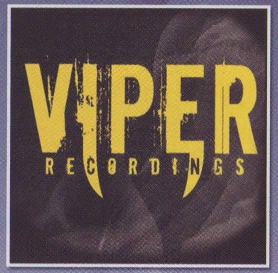
Q PROJECT - TEARS (MARKY & BUNGLE REMIX)
STATE OF MIND FEAT. LAURA PACHECO - GOODLOVE
ADVANCED



HEIST - AMBUSH
LOMAX - METAL FLANGE
COLAB (LP SAMPLER)

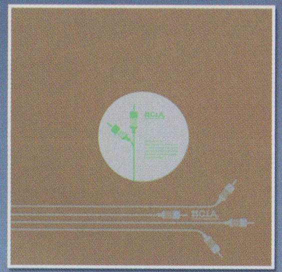
XRS & GIL GILBERTO
DIA DE SOL (DRUMAGICK REMIX)
BEATMASTERS

SHIMON - FREEZEOUT
ATOMIK TAGS - PUSHING, CREATING
URBAN PRESSURE



J MAJIK & WICKAMAN - FLESHWOUND (G DUB REMIX)
BROOKES BROTHERS - CRACKDOWN
VIPER

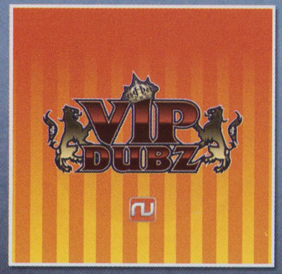
MICKY FINN & ERB N DUB
ATTENTION / STOP
FINN PEOPLE



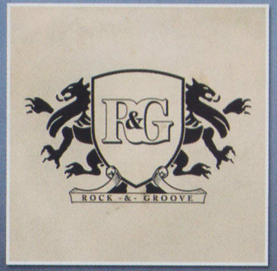
TOTAL SCIENCE
DEFCOM 69 VIP / RATED X (C.A.B.L.E REMIX)
CIA LTD

ICICLE - FINAL STOP
RIFT FEAT. SOULDROP - MELTDOWN
CYLON

DOUBLE ZERO
FORUM FANNIES / MIDNIGHT
PROPAGANDA



CAPITAL J
YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE / GOOD ACID / WE BANGIN' / DUTCH OVEN
VIP DUBZ



VISIONARY
ONE FOOT SKANKIN' / DUB-A-RUB STYLE
ROCK & GROOVE

LENZMAN
CAUGHT UP (NU TONE REMIX)
SPEARHEAD

CHOWDER - LITTLE PEOPLE
CALLIDE - MURDA SOUND
RED RECORDS

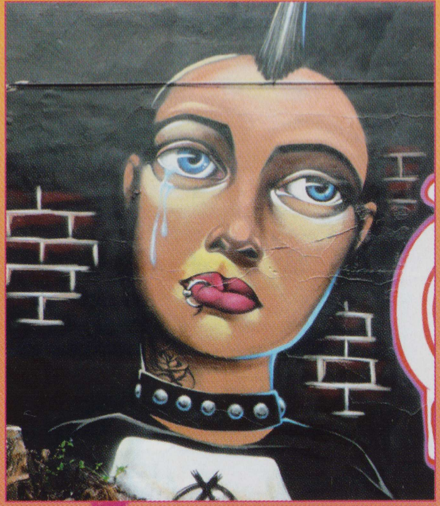
/// WORKIN' CLASS HEROES

c/o MR FRAMES

/// **CALIFORNIA LOVE.** The entire month of Jan for me was spent vacaying on the left coast and BOO-YAA it's all documented up in this bitch. Yep you got it yo, this month we report live from killah Cali. First up is an illass collabo from Seventh Letter vets **SABER, RETNA** & **REVOK** as they bang heads for Boost Mobile slap bang in the heart of Hollywood, follow this with a lil trip ro the infamous Hall Of Fame at the back of Melrose Ave, home of LA's notorious **CBS** crew. Then a long trip north to the Bay Area for some **SEVENTH LETTER** productions, check the **REVOK** joint in Frisco's Mission Distict this wall is a beast. /// Anyone who wants to contribute to WORKIN CLASS HEROES, send your photo's to framer@framerase.co.uk /// Peas. WE GHOST.

SABER /**RETNA** / **REVOK** // ANGELS WILL RISE // MELROSE AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA / **2007**

STOREBACK // MELROSE LA, CA / **2007**



STOREBACK // MELROSE LA, CA / **2007**

STOREBACK // MELROSE LA, CA / **2007**

CBS // CITY BOMB SQUAD // MELROSE AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA / **2007**

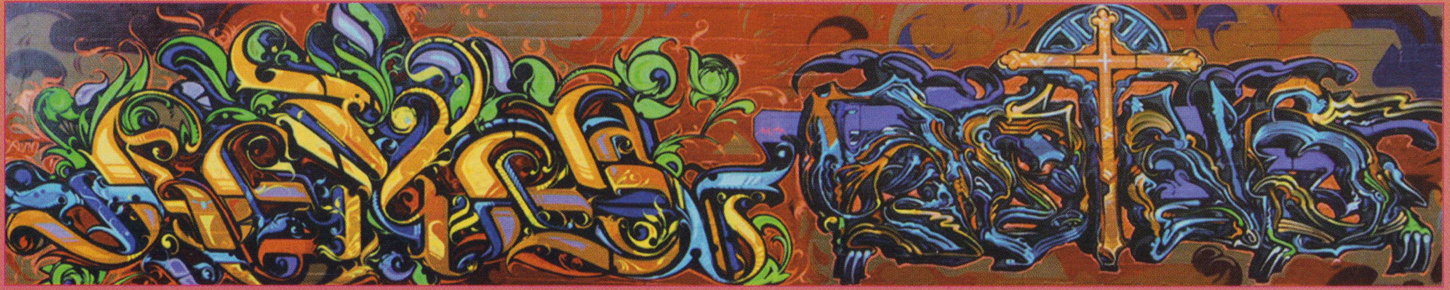
RETNA / **SABER** // MSK / 7TH LETTER // THE TENDERLOIN, SAN FRANCISCO, CA / **2007**

REVOK // MSK / 7TH LETTER // DOWNTOWN, LOS ANGELES, CA / **2007**

ATLAS // CITY BOMB SQUAD // MELROSE AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA / **2007**

REVOK // TRUCK, SAN FRANCISCO CA / **2007**

STOREBACK // HAIGHT ASHBURY, SF, CA / **2007**



REYES / **RETNA** // MSK / 7TH LETTER // MISSION, SAN FRANCISCO, CA / **2007**

REVOK // MSK / 7TH LETTER // MISSION, SAN FRANCISCO, CA / **2007**

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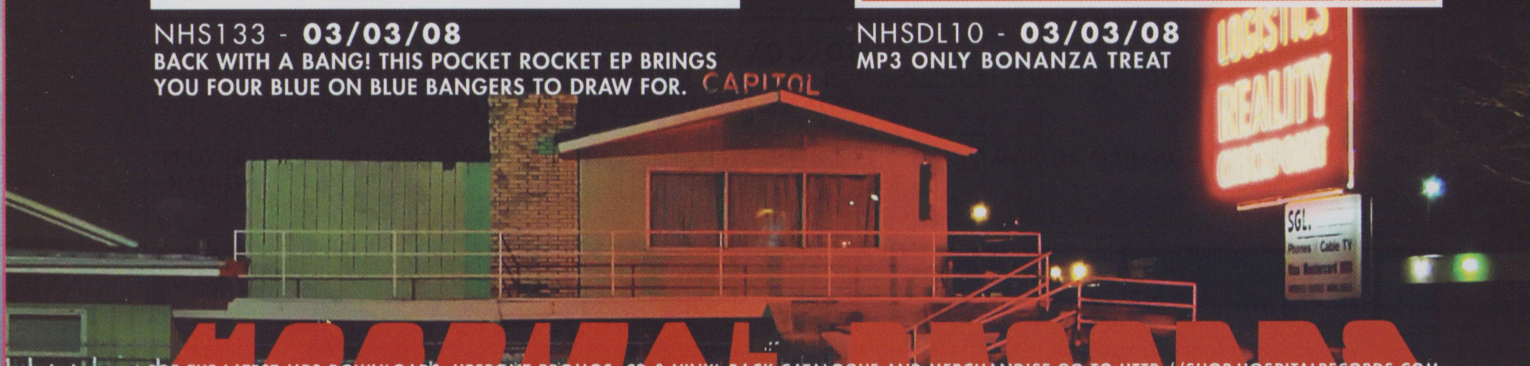

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HOSPITAL RECORDS

DJ CRAZE
STRAIGHT TALKING

words: Jon Ethics photo: Zen Inoya

DJ Craze is indisputably one of the greatest turntablists to ever flick a cross fader. His legend is immense, having won the DMC World Championship four times (the only person to ever win it three times consecutively) and once voted 'America's Best DJ' by Time magazine. It is Craze's abilities as a club DJ though, originally in hip hop and then, uniquely, in drum & bass that have made him stand out from other celebrated scratch DJs and allowed him to build an international career out of making parties bounce.

Back in the early years of this decade Craze burst onto an un-expecting D&B scene with his unique scratch-centric take on a sound that was until then a very closed and English affair. Alongside Brazil's Marky, Craze's frenetic sets gave a touch of international class to drum & bass and it wasn't long before he was playing at the biggest raves in the land.

Times change though, and over the last few years Craze has happily slipped from the D&B radar and resurfaced with a bouncing, bass heavy sound that cherry-picks the best of hip hop, electro and the burgeoning B-more and Miami bass scenes. If you're wondering what this strange brew of musical styles sounds like then, luckily for you, Fabric have called in Craze for the latest installment of their 'Fabric Live' series and given him free reign on his selection. It's in the London super club that ATM meets with the exceptionally warm and refreshingly polite American, his open conversation showing no signs of the obvious strain of riding the media merry-go-round that his short stay UK demands.

"Fabric were so cool," Craze begins when asked about the motivations behind his selection on the mix. "They asked me what I wanted to do and I said, 'Anything!'. It was complete freedom. The mix is a blend of club, Baltimore, Miami bass, old skool freestyle, old school electro combined with new school electro. It's dance music but it's not just full on 4/4. It's just party music. I've always switched it up every couple of years and this CD represents what I'm feeling right now. The cool parties I've done in the last couple of years have been me playing that kind of stuff."

The mix is certainly varied and showcases the increasingly popular 'melting pot' music policy in clubs across both the USA and the UK. Amongst the bustling menagerie of genres however, there is one notable omission in Crazes mix - drum & bass.

"There's no drum & bass on there at all. I've moved away from it now. About two years ago I put out a mix CD with a label that didn't clear the tracks. I got a lot of flack from that, from people inside drum & bass - from friends. I was kind of turned off because of that. I thought 'Yo, you know it ain't my fault. Why are you calling me up?'

"I'm a hip hop dude who got into drum & bass because I love the music. It wasn't like I was trying to prove anything or be anything. It was cool to come over here because it was something different for me. I didn't dress, talk or act like anybody in drum & bass. It was cool 'cause I felt like I had two different worlds going on at the same time. But it got to a point where I was going all over the world and people were wanting me to just play drum & bass, and I was like 'Yo, this is not all I do.' I remember playing some drum & bass parties in England and I'd throw in a hip hop track and people would walk out. I thought 'Yo, are you forgetting who I am. I'm not just a drum & bass dude.'

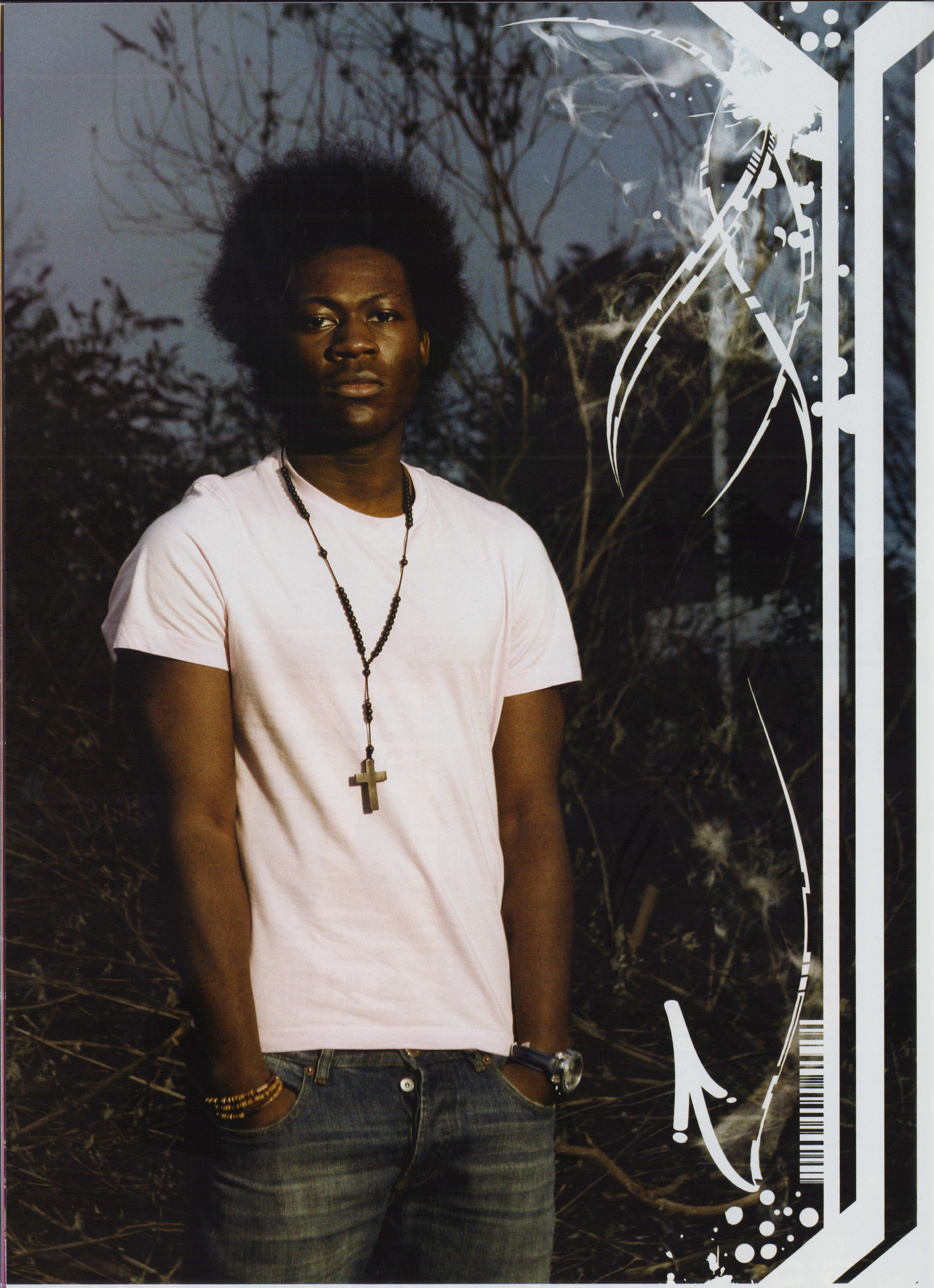
"As well, I felt like I was trying really hard but I wasn't getting the love back, I wasn't getting the dubs. People would be slagging me off saying my selection was weak and I'm like 'Well I don't have a selection!'. I felt, I wanna do more with it, but I couldn't, because that's the way people in drum & bass are; if you're not part of the clique, you're not getting the tunes. I felt like I couldn't compete.

"So I made it a point a couple of years ago that I didn't want to get booked for any full-on drum & bass nights. I didn't want to get caught up in something like that, because it doesn't give me the freedom to do different stuff."

Such honesty is a rare thing in drum & bass, but then as Craze says he's a hip hop guy, and with a reputation as huge and well earned as his, he obviously has no problem telling it straight. In spite of this, Craze isn't completely turning his back on D&B and he admits that despite finding success elsewhere within music, there is some sadness in no longer being part of the scene.

"Yeah, there is a touch of sadness because I still love the music. But I'm still gonna play drum & bass, but now it's more 10 minutes at the end. Where as it was one hour of hip hop, one hour of drum & bass. But then it got to two hours of drum & bass and I was like 'Woah! I don't get that many dubs, what am I supposed to play?' Politics were like 10 per cent, no actually 20 per cent of it, but I think people should always try and reinvent themselves because then your career lasts longer. For me I like all kinds of music, I don't wanna be that dude that tells other people what to play and I don't wanna be that dude who only plays what other people feel he should."

Fabric Live 38: DJ Craze is out now.



BENGA
WARRIOR CHARGE!

words: Markle picture: Shaun Bloodworth

ATM meet afro-topped production maverick Beni 'Benga' Adejumo in the lobby of a bitterly cold East Croydon station on a commuter packed Tuesday evening. He's freezing his tits off. His stylish blue coat, colour coded with his sparkling BAPE trainers, is as thin as a plastic bag. "I had a photo shoot for XLR8TR Magazine this afternoon with Skream, then recorded an interview and mix with Gilles Peterson for his Radio One show," says the 21-year old Benga. "It's been a long day. I'm freezing!" Thankfully, style over substance is not a quality prevalent on his eagerly awaited second long player, 'Diary Of An Afro Warrior'; it's a cornucopia of disfigured melody and probing electronic hedonism.

Before we delve into the wirey, sonic undergrowth of the album, we should really take a minute to observe the journey that matured and formed this musical prodigy. Before tinkling with midi keyboards, the Coulsdon, South London resident, was twinkling on the football pitch. Playing for Arsenal YTS, the young 12-year-old grew up in a footballing family, yet the inevitable choice between kicking ball and music was always clear. "My brother at that time was mad, saying things like, 'You gotta stop doing one, music or football.' So, I picked music, 'coz I felt it more, I enjoyed it more. I could sit for days and days making music," says Benga.

It was a combination of juvenile cheek and perfect timing that saw him get his first break. Experimenting at primary school with a stolen tape recorder, he began his first foray into working with music. "I would get this little tape recorder, hold it up to my stereo system and record and stop," recalls Benga. "Then I'd put another tune on and create a dodgy mix." The young innovator was soon buying drum and bass and garage records from Big Apple Records, even without his own pair of decks (when a friend got his first set up, Benga nailed the technique in just two weeks). Still just 12, his tender years marked him out from the rest. "They said to me, 'Hey, you're too young to be buying records, you're wasting your money pal.' I was like, 'I bet I can mix better than you.' They were like, 'C'mon then.' So I clashed Hatcha (much laughter)," quips Benga. So impressed with his skills, Hatcha and then owner, John Kennedy, began to watch him DJ regularly. "I was playing some place down the road called Blue Anchor and John came in and said 'I can't believe you're tearing down the crowd and you're only 12!'" says Benga.

Playing alongside Hatcha introduced him to dubplate culture and the dark garage sounds of El-B, Benny Ill and Ghost. This was the catalyst for his own foray into production, "Hatcha would tear it up, he had so many tunes I couldn't get, and that pissed me off. So the only way to get tunes like that was to make them myself," recounts Benga. "I tried to imitate it, but where my sound wasn't strong enough, the same with Skream, we'd come with some next level on it." This was a style that producer Arthur Smith aka Artwork (who also worked at Big Apple) was keen to encourage, helping shape the acidic, proto-dubstep textures that would soon see fruition on Big Apple Records as Skank in 2002.

Fast forward to January 2008, and I'm sitting opposite an accomplished and confident producer. A brief two year hiatus from 2004-2006 allowed Benga to indulge in some more lucrative music ventures. Developing his production skills exponentially, this ultimately helped shape the sound and character we hear in his dubstep music today.

Yet techniques are merely tools of the trade. It is the vibrant creativity that impresses on 'Diary of an Afro Warrior'; from the warm Detroit techno of 'Emotions', to the jazz licks of opener 'Zero M2' and 'B4 The Dual', which stand in contrast with the sheer uncontrollable electro filth of '26 Basslines' and 'E Trips'. What is more astounding is that Benga has never bought a Carl Craig 12" or listened to Pharaoh Saunders' jazz and is not a massive music collector. "I'm not really the kind of sit down and listen to a certain type of music person. I just listen to whatever's around," says Benga. "I remember Arthur went out and bought me a bunch of CDs, there was loads of old stuff. He bought me Chic, Stevie Wonder and loads of other old school things. That's about it really, that's the only time I've listen to whole albums."

It's clear that days spent hanging out his window with an aerial tuning into whatever pirate radio station was in range, had a profound effect on the young producer; absorbing jungle, hardcore and garage or "proper bangin, mad shit!" as he enthusiastically remembers. Whilst many producers heavily reference the past, overtly highlighting heroes, inspirations and icons, Benga is the opposite. Instead, like a super absorbent sponge, he seems to have unconsciously soaked up the musical energies buzzing through everyday life, allowing them to infuse and mutate within him, before channelling back out through his own unique, organic compositions. "Arthur used to say, "You're really natural at it. You kind of listened to music when you were younger and get the influences now'; it all comes out when I'm making music," states Benga.

In comparison with his first long player, 2006's 'Newstep' released on his own Benga Beats imprint - more a compilation of songs than a coherently structured long player – 'Diary Of An Afro Warrior' suggests a more experimental and expansive Benga. "I learnt a lot when I was making pop and house music, but I turn it on and off. It's knowing how to use it in dubstep," he says. The CD album is laden with 14 tracks; club bangers, 'Night', 'Crunked Up' and '28 Basslines', mix genially with more lyrical gambits, including the ambidextrous 'Loose Synths' and off kilter wonk of '3 Minutes'. 'Pleasure' and 'Go Tell Them', proffer quirky vocals snippets, both manic and mysterious, they are perfect genre bending oddities. The house inflected 'Someone20' further challenges the dubstep envelope, clocking in around 120 bpm, yet retaining all the paraphernalia of a true Benga creation.

For those with a vinyl dependency, you'll be in for an altogether different experience. Culling all but four of the CD tracks, yet adding five new ones, the triple-plate vinyl LP is made simply and eloquently for the dance. "When you go to the vinyl it's different, that's for clubs. I genuinely believe that when I make tunes for clubs, it's just dancefloor" states Benga. Gone are the accessible motifs, in come subsonic, angular creations like 'Twister', 'Metallic' and 'Out of Phaze', more than enough to scare off the uninitiated, but plenty to make the hardcore drool.

Not many dancefloors have avoided the irresistibly catchy hook of 'Night', even in the Middle East. "Skream was playing in Israel and he phoned me up and said, 'Listen to this', a whole bus was singing the main riff of 'Night' – do do do do do do dooo dooo doo doo do – it was mad!" Built with fellow producer Coki (one half of Digital Mystikz and the only collaboration on the album), it was a conscious upping of both producer's games that led to its creation. "It was our third tune. We made 'World War 7' together, another tune called 'Full Throttle'. They were mediocre; I'm not saying they were shit, but average tunes, we should be able to come up with something new. We kept coming up with melodies and riffs, but kept turning them down; it's weird how the simplest thing worked so well," recounts Benga.

Skream maybe dubstep's pin up boy, but Benga is fast stamping his indelible mark into the collective consciousness. Smashing seven shades of bass out of Pete Tong's Essential Mix in early February, Benga also has recorded slots with a host of Radio One tastemakers: Gilles Peterson, Annie Mac and Rob Da Bank, and has even received peak daytime spins from Jo Whiley, highlighting more than anything the reach and appeal of his music. Yet, these are rare chances to hear Benga on the radio, and for good reason. "People can over rinse it. When I'm playing out things are still fresh, I've a lot of tunes in my bag that I don't think people have heard. So when I'm playing you think, 'Do I wanna come out?' It makes your mind up for you, simple," says Benga.

If you do catch one of Benga's electrifying DJ sets – a punishing dubplate journey through the outer reaches of dubstep; a fusion of techno, grime, jazz and electro, imploding into a hyper energetic wall of sound and sub – you'll see his hair first and trainers second. Is he addicted to BAPE trainers? "Badly, baaadly," he chuckles back. The reason resonates heavily with his music and desire to maintain individuality; "BAPE's are exclusive, with only one pair in your size in Europe. You'd never come across the same person wearing the same ones. I've been ringing up BAPE every day this week because they have four new pairs out and I'm gonna buy every single one of them," Benga confesses.

If you do draw your eyes away from his sub £160 trainers for a second, you'll also notice a few familiar faces in the dance. Skream, Hijak, Walsh and other scene luminaries frequently support each other at gigs. Yet it has been Benga's close friendship with Skream that has helped get both of them where they are today. "He pushes my limits and I think I do the same to him," admits Benga, "it's no competition, it's more the fact that I make a tune that's big and he'll want to make a tune better than that. It's only healthy for us. It helps to keep you sane and grounded. Living in that world too much, you'll start thinking you're a super star."

Diary of an Afro Warrior is out on Tempa in March 2008. For more info: www.myspace.com/bengabeats

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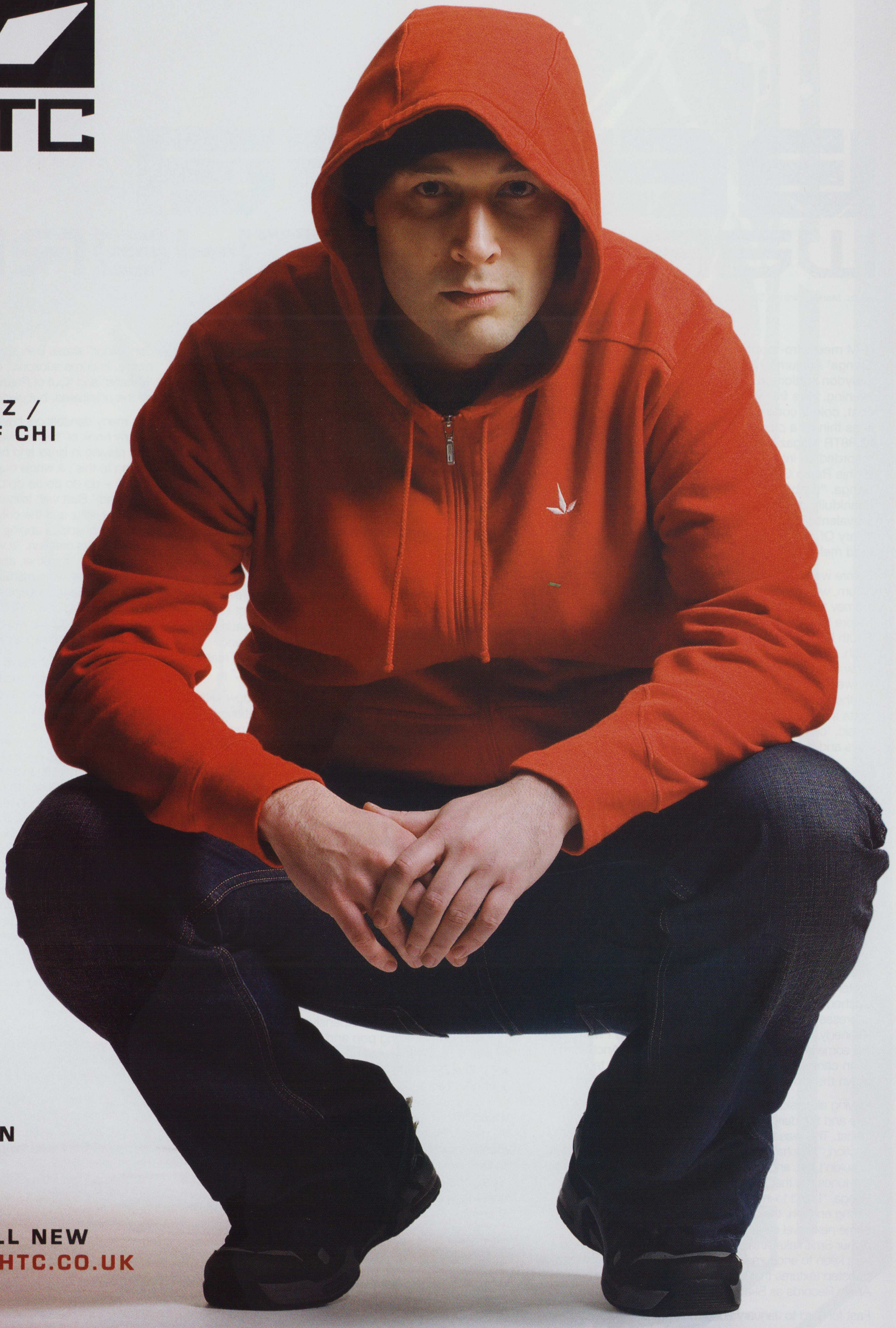

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PETE ROCK
SOUL SURVIVOR

words: Jesse Keene

Pete Rock is the Bronx born DJ / producer who cemented himself firmly within the hip-hop hall of fame alongside up and coming rapper, CL-Smooth, back in 1992 with the release of their classic album 'Mecca And The Soul Brother'. That was not the beginning for Pete as he had already worked alongside legend Marley Marl on his New York-based radio show back in the late 80s. With a history of this nature, when the opportunity arose to catch a few words from him on his new album and the state of the hip-hop scene today, it was a no-brainer. Please sit back and ingest the words of one of NY's finest, live and direct for your reading pleasure.

First of all, I'd like to bring you back to the early days of your career around the time you were doing the WBLS radio. What sort of people did you come in contact with and how did that inspire you to create music?
Basically I would watch and listen to the people who were around me at the time, from the likes of Marley Marl and also the people who would pass through the show. I was always the curious type and wanted to know what the guys behind the scenes were doing. I was lucky enough to have family who were already established in the business. Heavy D was my cousin and he had just got a record deal, so I would cruise with him and meet people and make contacts. That was what really inspired me to want to do the same thing and mark out an identity as an artist for myself.

Of course that led you to do music with CL Smooth and also to peruse solo projects. How do you feel that the scene has changed from those early days?
I think at that time it was just a new thing that I was doing. I just took it that step further from what Marley Marl and the other guys did before me. I wanted to push the boundaries a little and gauge the people's response to it. I just feel there was a difference between the 90s music and what it is now because the music industry has changed so much. With the music we made back then, it was what I would call effortless; the music had soul and really came across as though the artist cared about what they were doing, and that needs to be readdressed in hip-hop today. The scene has progressed a lot; you have new breeds of rap forming which are being played out here in New York. Bands like Outkast, I love them I think the way they approach their music is extremely clever. Then you got the sound that's rising from the South with acts like T.I. & Lil Wayne, who are the younger generation along, with the guys in NYC like Memphis Bleek, Jim Jones etc. But it's changed now, you have hip-hop and R&B mixed together with pop, which makes it what commercial rap is today. We hear it a lot in the U.S. and it's a mixed bag. There is some of it that is effortless and clever, while on the other hand some of those records don't make sense at all, and I feel that I wouldn't want my kids listening to it.

You have dropped the new album 'NY's Finest'. Can you tell us who you worked with on the projects and how the links came about?
The artists I worked with on there include Styles P & Sheek Looch from the Lox, Jim Jones, Max B, Royal Flush my man from Queens, Little Brother and Doo Wop. I've got Green Lantern on there as well; he produced one of the tracks, and we got Chip-Fu along with Lords of the Underground. These are just relationships that I had in the past. Jim Jones is a little more recent, but we both have respect for each other's music and he has a street edge. It was like he was the new guy and I was the old chip off the block still making that hot shit! I felt it was a good opportunity to do something different with him. The same with the Loxs. They're like neighbourhood guys - they live a town across from me - so we were both familiar with each other's sound. That's how it worked with this project; it was born out of a love for the music and a mutual respect between myself and the artists involved. That's why I think that this is a great album. It's a little different - I have a reggae song on there and, as I said earlier, I have a joint with Green Lantern. There are still a couple of tracks that have that Pete Rock element to them, but more advanced, and I just want people to take from it whatever they want. If you're passionate about music, learning your history, knowing who's who and what's important to rap, I feel that you can take that from this album.

Why do you feel it's important to work with artists such as Chip-Fu from the Fu-Shnickens and Lords of The Underground? Do you feel that there's a different process now to how you'd to work back in the days?
Well I just want people to realise how serious I am about making this music and I want to show people that I am not going anywhere. I still feel that I make great music so I need to work with the proper artists like Chip Fu & L.O.T.U. I feel that NYC needs to unify more, as there was a time when we worked with the artists and mapped out our songs together. Nowadays you just have producers sending guys beats through e-mail and stuff like that, which is cool, but you don't get that feeling of interaction in the music. I feel that if you put the effort into working with people in the studio, to go that one extra mile that really shows in your music and comes across to your fans. You have got to have them in mind when you create your sound because they're the ones that are consuming it and looking to us to make good music that they can appreciate.

Pete Rock's new album, 'NY's Finest', will be out in the UK on the 10th March, with a worldwide tour to follow so keep an eye on the press for details.

Dillinja & Lemon D

10 years of Valve

words: Ben Wilmott picture: Dennis Mortimer

We are living in an age of compromise, at least when it comes to sound. Discs have been compacted, and then in turn super-ceded by the even more crushed and compressed MP3 file. Some DJs have even abandoned dubplates and vinyl altogether. Others, like rave pioneers Future Sound Of London, now choose to play gigs down phone lines from the safety of their studio rather than venture out to your local town. While being able to listen to tunes on your mobile or iPod might be convenient, these developments should actually concern lovers of drum and bass perhaps more than any other genre. Ever since the days of jungle, it's been about pushing the very limits of production, getting the biggest, baddest frequencies out of the biggest, baddest speakers that human hands could construct.

It's been about a heritage that stretches back into reggae sound systems like Jah Shaka and Manassah, who've been setting up their hand built sound systems in various venues across the capital, like Brixton Recreation Centre and Notting Hill Carnival, since the 70s. Armed often with little more than one deck and a microphone, they can be relied upon to this day to deliver, via piercing sirens and rumbling, internal organ-threatening basslines, some of the most extreme sonic experience your ears could ever encounter.

Growing up in South London with such heritage all around them, Lemon D and Dillinja of Valve know this better than most. As a teenager, Dillinja would work on assembling speakers from scratch, building the cabinets by hand. So, it was a natural move having formed the Valve label ten years ago that their next move was to get together a sound system they could take around the country. D&B being a scene that's all about sound over image, and fed up with presenting their work on cruddy club systems, they wanted to protect their biggest asset.

Since then, the Valve Sound System has proved, quite simply, one of the biggest draws in D&B. As Lemon D says, "We can pull 2,000 people now and we put the best parties on. Not that other DJs can't pull that many people, but from the promoters feedback we get, the best parties they have are always ours." For Lemon it's been about protecting what he simply calls 'the sound'. "It's definitely under threat from things like MP3 files," he says, "so what we're doing with the sound system is trying to keep that going and protect it. Because if that goes - the sound of a dubplate being played on a big system - a lot of things will die with it."

About to celebrate their tenth year in existence with a collection that mixes a host of new tracks with fresh reworkings of various Valve classics – including, appropriately enough, 'Big Bad Bass' – you might forgive Lemon and Dillinja for resting on their laurels a little. Especially, because, as well as lugging the system to various corners of the country, they've also been responsible for a massive output of amazing records from the early 90s, when their distinctive productions helped to seal the reputations of labels like Metalheadz and Prototype to the present prolific Valve output.

But the pair are now looking to the future more than glorying in the past. "We couldn't just put a load of old tunes on it," says Lemon of the tenth anniversary album, "apart from anything else, we sold thousands of copies of the last two albums and so it wouldn't be fair to expect people to buy the same old stuff again." Typically direct when ATM enquires as to whether there are any new musical directions on display in the new material, he replies, "Not really". They're just more exercises in the already much beloved Valve sound, he reckons, and when we agree that a new track from the label is usually immediately recognisable in the mix, he says, "Well, that's what we've been working on for the past ten years! That's what Reinforced really had going on too; they really locked their sound down."

That said, while the last ten years have been mainly spent making landmark D&B, Lemon has made trip-hop and a host of tempo-bending experimental tracks, and the pair's talents in the future are not to be confined to the genre, Lemon says he's been making electronic music and soundtrack material over the past couple of years and finds it a refreshing change from D&B that also feeds back positively when he does return to the genre. He also says they've signed dub-step crew Slaughter Mob to the label, its first non-D&B signing. "We're giving them a load of our old classics to see what they do with them," he says.

He also says he can envisage a time when the Valve experience won't just be a case of DJs and back-to-back D&B. "We want to move towards a situation where we're not just coming to DJ, we're coming with the Valve show," he says, "so instead of just me and Dillinja playing with supporting DJs, we'll have our own lightshow and the whole bill will be Valve artists doing their thing, whatever that is. I don't see why there shouldn't be all sorts of electronic music."

He says a recent booking for the Valve sound system in Manchester saw them share the bill with the Scratch Perverts, Ninja Tune's turntablist wizards DJ Food and dubstep DJs. "There were 3,000 people there and they were loving it," he recalls proudly, "it really felt good to break it up. I think people are sick of hearing the same thing all night."

There's already a unique element of showbiz glamour that accompanies a visit from the Valve Sound System that sets it above the usual DJ booking. In Plymouth, local ravers excitedly talked about how the city's historic Dance Academy venue might collapse under the vibrations, but bought tickets all the same. Having wondered exactly how loud the system is that earned a place in the Guinness Book Of Records as the world's loudest on the way to see Valve at the Coronet in Elephant and Castle, I had a pair of free earplugs thrust into my hand. Without them, I discovered, it would prove physically impossible to stand in front of the speakers which lined two sides of the dancefloor.

At one point during the Coronet gig Lemon and Dillinja, who shared the decks for the lion's share of the evening, dropped Fresh's 'Floodlight', a weird record mainly consisting of a protracted spoken word passage before a couple of minutes of dancefloor madness finally hits. Certainly not your usual jump-up fodder, and a record that doesn't fit conveniently into many DJs sets. But the gamble paid off because after some confused looks at first, its effect on the crowd was electric.

It's this kind of individualism, Lemon says, that used to be an integral part of D&B but the scene is desperately in need of rediscovering. "For every great tune there are a hundred clones," he says, "sometimes it's just the same notes in a slightly different order. Or the use of an amen break without even bothering to chop it or flip it or anything. People hear a big tune and think, 'This is what I've got to do because I haven't got a brain!' What happened to the idea of wanting to make something that no-one has ever heard before? I must admit I don't have much have respect for a track when I hear something we did ten years ago."

Meanwhile the Valve vinyl onslaught continues with a Dillinja EP, just in the shops as we caught up with Lemon in mid-February, soon to be followed by an EP featuring Friction, Dan Miracle, Majistrate and a Lemon D and MC Fats collaboration. There are also plans, naturally, for the third album in the Valve series, one which they say will probably reflect a slightly wider taste in musical styles compared to their D&B predecessors.

They've achieved so much in the last decade, but it's a sign of their continuing devotion to the original values and aims of the scene that they're looking to the future on every level. This is just the beginning, in other words. Can we assume, then, that the first chapter in their history feels like it's gone in a flash? "Not really," says Lemon, "because we've done a lot in that time. We've packed a lot in."

www.myspace.com/vlvrecordings
www.myspace.com/lemonde73
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title: Breath In, Scream Out
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GIMME 5
WITH DJ MOSUS

With my deadline upon me for this issue, I was hunting the boutiques of Mexico City to find some super-fresh gear to destroy the streets from Shoreditch to Soho. There’s one shop left on the list, it’s hot, the streets are buzzing and the dopest product available is Trainerspotter. I’m in one of the biggest city’s in the world and I still can’t escape the UK influence, so for this Gimmie 5 I’m going to spread some light on one of the fastest growing brands out of the UK.

The ‘(K)night & The City’ collection, follows last seasons ‘Lost Soles’ by continuing to showcase the wider influences that make Trainerspotter the brand it is. Launched in 2003, Trainerspotter is a sportswear brand with a simple mission: to fuse sports culture and streetwear. Celebrating sports icons, sneakers and ground breaking moments in history, Trainerspotter shirts express the insurrectionary spirit of McEnroe combined with Agassi’s rock and roll sports ethos. The graphics and images emblazoned on the garments form a secret history of cool.

For the first time a dedicated women’s range of tees is also available, cut in an 80s slouch style with cap sleeves. You can see TS gear adorning many of today’s visionaries, like De La Soul, The Artic Monkeys, Pharrell Williams, Kate Moss, Kavinsky, and many others. Stocked worldwide in the coolest stores of each city, Trainerspotter is rapidly evolving and continually offering more detailed garments, telling more inspirational stories but never compromising the brand ethos.

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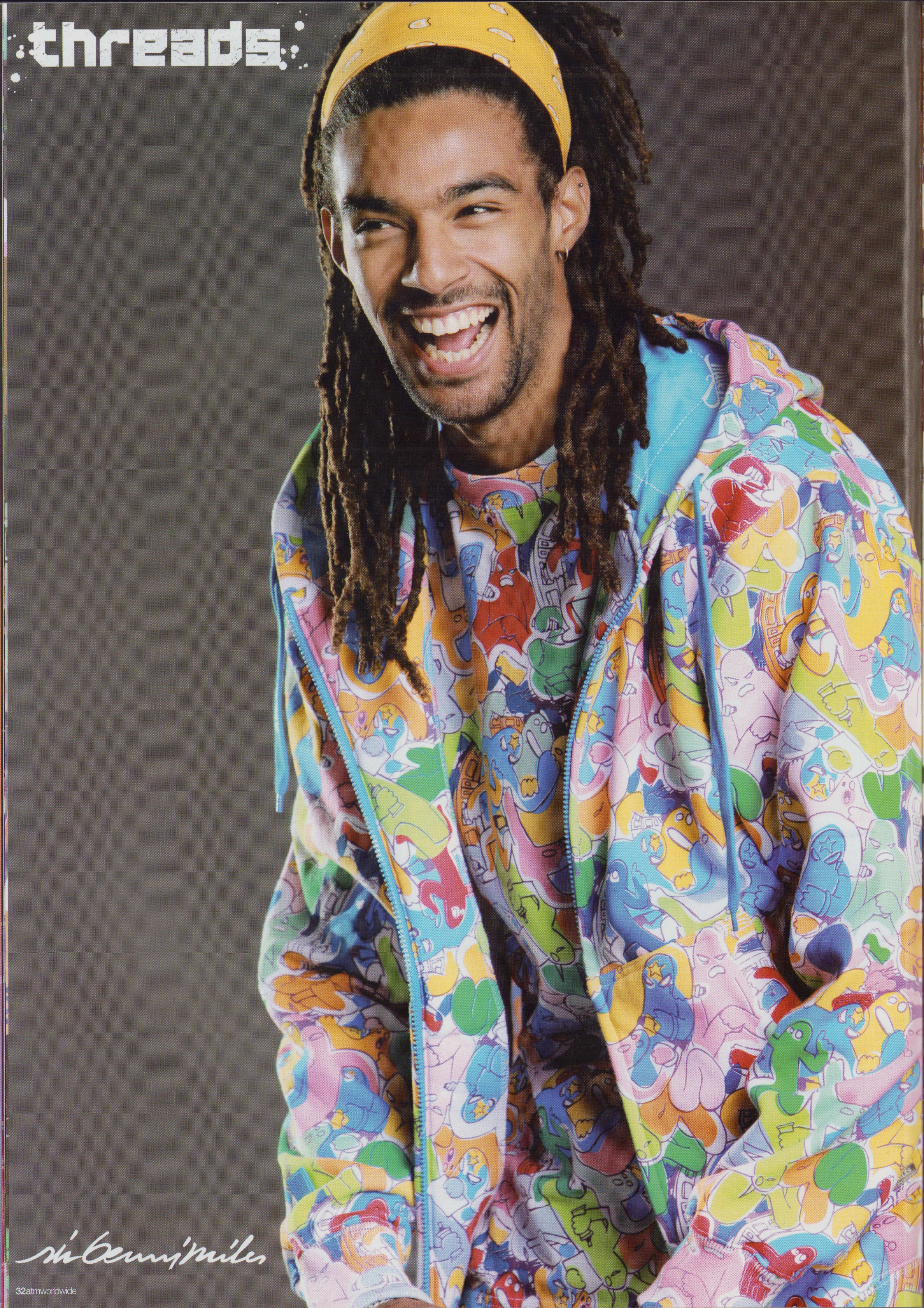

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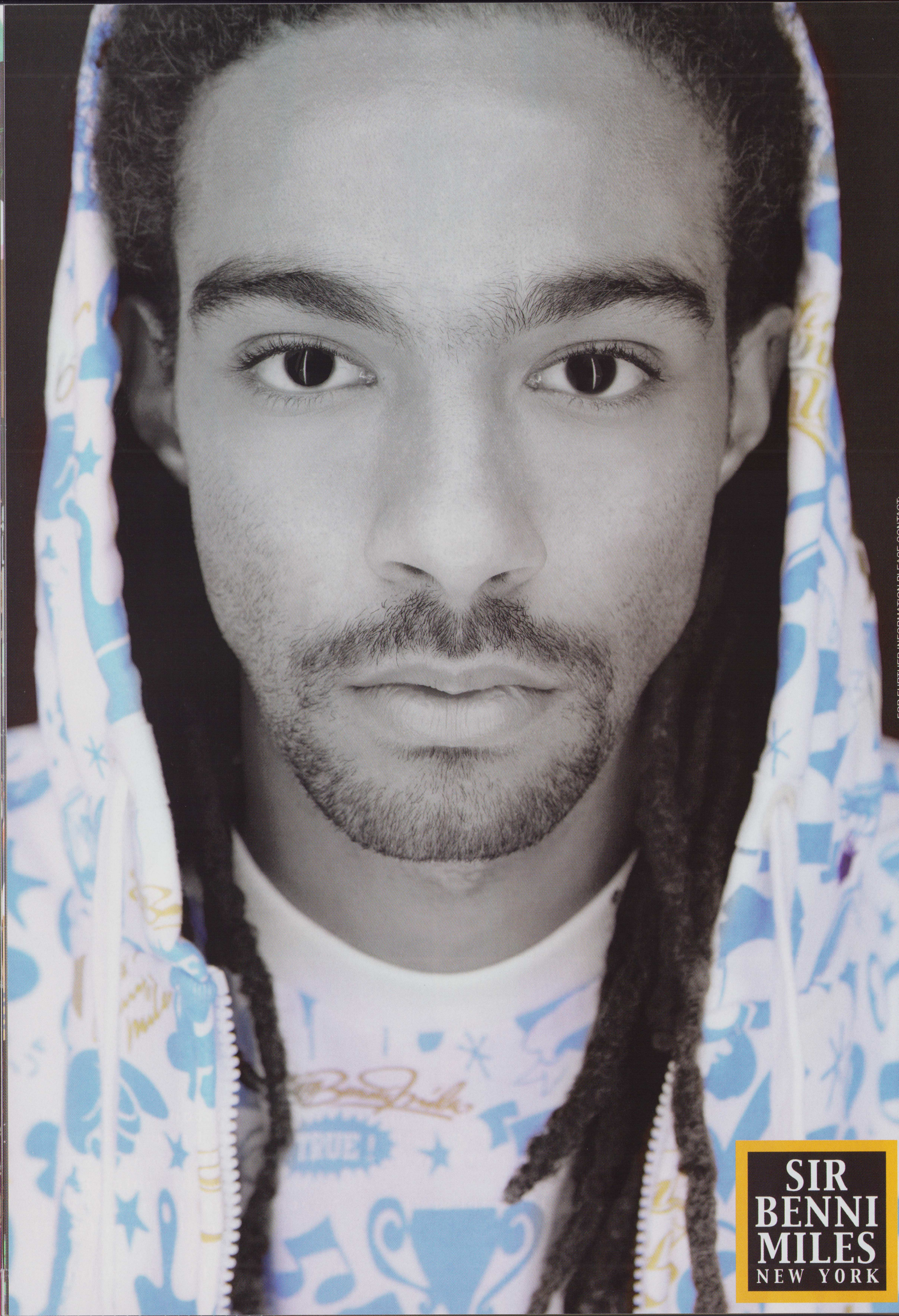
Photography by Will Whipple



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Atomic Hooligan
Live & Direct

words: Joe Gamp photo: Zen Inoya

It'd just gone 10.15 on Monday morning, and ATM arrived at the last notable point of the southern territories; that's right, glamorous Watford. Not many people realise, but Watford has a rich musical background. Although there's no particular scene here, it has spawned talent the length and breadth of the music spectrum, including rapper Dubbledge and various others. We're here to speak to the latest talent bursting out of the city suburb, Atomic Hooligan.

As ATM staggered sleepily around Watford junction station, we received a call from Matt Hooligan asking whether we're lost. After finding both Terry and Matt waiting beside their beaten up Datsun Cherry, we shake hands, exchange stories about being stuck abroad and drive towards the nearest caffeine establishment to promptly wake up.

After ordering some overpriced coffees, we nestle in the corner of Costa, and begin to chat. Matt and Terry are both responsible for the success of 'You Are Here', voted best breaks album of 2006, but they feel that aren't trying to outdo their previous efforts with the follow up, 'Sex, Drugs & Blah Blah Blah'. "It's definitely more of a progression, we're not trying to better ourselves," Terry muses, "we've just put more musicality into, we've spent time writing the songs and trying to make it open out. Matt's production has really come along and we're able to define our sound even further."

A chilled, friendly and down-to-earth pair, their attitude towards their music couldn't be any further from the sound they produce. Relaxed, direct and focused, the Hooligans aren't interested in winning awards and following fads; they just want to make their music, their way. "Music has become quite generic in places," states Terry, a burly geezer of a man, responsible for high pressure DJ shows around the world. "I mean everyone is talking about electro and jumping on the electro-clash bandwagon" he criticises, "it's cool but to me it doesn't sound like real electro at all," he laughs.

And Terry should definitely know. A major fan of both UK and US hip hop, particularly the golden nineties era, he enlisted the help of local boy Genesis Elijah, and Gang Starr foundation legend, Afu Ra to spit their flows over tracks. "Afu is such a great guy," confirms Terry. "He's so together and he isn't about the money," adds Matt, "too many of these guys are so blasé about the music, they're just interested in money and that's it" he reckons. "But Afu was well into it from the start," beams Terry, "and he gave it a wicked flow. Not just some half-arsed rap that he did when he got out of bed, he really nailed the Hooligans sound. We're really happy with his vocals".

As the album crosses musical genres, ATM enquires if the Hooligan's rock influence is still there. "We've got rock elements, and loads of bits with live guitar and bass (although its hard to spot which bars), but we've really tried to incorporate a lot of stuff," says Matt, "make of it what you will I guess, but it's definitely more than just another breaks album," he proudly smiles.

The duo come armed with a reinforced and highly crafted 10-piece band to replicate the sound live, the next show being Breakspoll at Fabric. This is something that can really push breaks in the right direction but how difficult is it to setup? "We've managed to get all of these guys together for the show; before it would be fairly occasional but now it's really regimented and organised, even though Justine, our singer, comes down from Wales and we practice in Bournemouth. We're just a big unit now!" explains Matt.

Break's has earned itself a stigma as being quite closed off and reclusive. But the Hooligans prove to be all encompassing and open to change, while maintaining high levels of energy and participation, even when DJing. "Terry even loves to perform when DJing, headbutting the CDJ and stuff, really creating energy," smiles Matt. "Well, it has to be like that" Terry cuts in, "there's nothing worse than watching a static DJ, or being in a crowd where everyone stands around with their arms folded, musing over the EQ's and stuff. It's really geeky, and to me, it's all about entertainment and feeding off the crowd".

We all take the piss out of chin-strokers for a bit before Matt states, "We're not just boom DJ's, there you go. Dance music really should be played live. There's a major performance element within the act of dancing, and there's nothing worse than boring performers. We're trying to mix visual with sonic".

Their genre-mashing exploits have taken the boys from Japan to the US, peddling their funky and high octane sound right around the globe; they've even been featured in the likes of dusty old rock periodicals like MOJO and Q magazines. Surely, a definite career high must have been playing to the Glastonbury festival crowd. "Glasto was a massive crowd, and it was a real tuning point for us, probably our biggest; we played to like 10,000 people. It's cool though 'cos you can only see the first few thousand anyway," they both laugh.

And so, after two coffee's, lots of chatter about new releases, Japanese tour managers and how having a record label in every continent helps you get heard, we leave the dimly lit coffee house into the glaring light of the street. On route to the station, ATM ask Matt about the origins of the album title, and if their making a stand against materialist greed and fame in music. "It's sort of that pretend rock'n'roll style y'know? 'Sex, Drugs & Blah Blah Blah,'" he sighs as we screech around a tight bend, "It's that, whatever, towards rock star DJs, who care about materials and drugs, sometimes more than music".

Atomic Hooligan's, 'Sex, Drugs & Blah Blah Blah' is out on March 17th.

LOGISTICS

LIVING THE DREAM

words: Jon Ethics photo: Cleveland Aaron

A converted old people's home deep in the leafy suburbs of London is not the most obvious location for the headquarters of a drum & bass empire. But, here, in the comparatively pastoral environs of Forest Hill, far removed from the throbbing central streets and urban 'charm' of the capital, the ever unorthodox Hospital Records camp has made its home.

As we are welcomed into the impressive offices with a cup of tea and a seat on a very comfortable sofa, it's clear Hospital is that rare thing in drum & bass: a professional, organised and obviously profitable brand and record label. Flyers for the huge Hospitality parties at Heaven are neatly stacked in one corner, computer keys click away beneath busy fingers and phones ring incessantly as we wait, flicking through innumerable magazines from the last couple of years with Hospital artists' faces beaming from the covers.

One of these faces belongs to the man we are here to meet, Matt Gresham - better known as Logistics. One of Hospital's biggest artists, Logistics' driving, energy-drenched productions have launched him into D&B's upper strata, earning him equal respect from the ravers and the heads in just a few short years. Since the genre busting classic 'Together' made his name back in 2004, Nu Tone's 26 year old little brother has continued to consistently pump out his own unique brand of euphoric, musically developed drum & bass. Just 18 months after his debut album, Logistics is back with his second, 'Reality Checkpoint', the motivations and aspirations behind which ATM are here today to discover.

With the last drop of tea gone from the white ceramic Hospital branded mug, it's downstairs we go, through the warehouse overflowing with records and merchandise and into the purpose built studio where the Hospital artists come to mix down their tracks. Sat in the acoustically tempered silence of the studio, it's hard not to be impressed by the way Hospital are doing things; from the branded mugs for the complementary tea to the in-house top spec studio, this just isn't the way things are usually done in the messy business world of drum & bass.

"I couldn't ask for anymore than being on Hospital," Logistics says as if to confirm these perceptions, "I was thinking about it the other day, that I'm in a really nice situation where I work with people I really get on with, doing something I really love. My brother's doing it, my really good mates Commix are doing so well. It's just a good time right now where I'm really happy with where I'm at and with everything around me."

The good times are set to continue for Logistics too - in the world of drum & bass at least - with the release in March of 'Reality Checkpoint'. Without doubt this is his most interesting and varied work to date. While still retaining the melodic intricacies and immaculate production that epitomise the Logisitics sound, this album sees the Cambridge-based producer exploring fresh musical territories, the inducements for which he is keen to explain.

"For me, when I made the first album I think I was conscious of doing what people expected of me. The idea when I made it was to make it as much as a home listening album as it was a dancefloor one. I was conscious not to leave behind the sound I'd established before, but for 'Reality Checkpoint' I thought, right I just want to make the music that I love making. So whether that fits into dancefloor, home listening, coffee table stuff or whatever, I didn't really have any set plan, apart from to make the music I really wanted to.

"I think for a while I was getting caught up in the whole DJ thing; where you are trying to make tunes that smash it on the dancefloor. I decided consciously to move away from that and just focus on making music that I really like. Try and draw on my influences more and try and not just make tunes that are straight up dancefloor fodder. Longevity is the thing I really try to get into everything I do. I want my music to have shelf life. Not for it just to be where a tune is cool for this month but six months down the line it sounds dated already. I don't really see the point in that."

Whether or not the tracks on 'Reality Checkpoint' will stand the test of time is yet to be seen, but with tracks like the half-time tribal shuffle of 'Cold World' or the twisted two step swing of 'Cocoon' Logistics is definitely treading new ground with both his sound and musical direction.

"I've made a lot of tracks like Cocoon before that have never got out of my computer and no one's ever heard. That track was weird to make; I did the intro and then just couldn't write a drop for it. I left it for a month, was listening to a lot of electro and techno and then went back and did the drop. Like I was saying about forgetting what's DJ friendly and just making something that is music and to me sounds cool."

What's really striking about 'Cocoon' and 'Cold World' is that the untrained ear would probably not even recognise them as drum & bass. With the rise of dubstep it seems that ravers are becoming more open to half-time grooves on the usually manically tempoed dancefloors of drum & bass. Breakage, Instra:mental and Chase & Status have all provided some excellent examples of this fresh direction for the scene and Logistics is enthused by the satisfaction he obviously achieved in providing his take on the sound.

"For me, there's something really nice about writing a track that is drum & bass and will fit into a drum & bass set, but that doesn't necessarily sound like drum & bass. So you know, hopefully people will hear something like that on the album or when they're out and think 'Oh, it doesn't sound like pots and pans, it doesn't scare me' and it doesn't make them want to run out the club as soon as it comes on the system. But for me I really want to explore every corner of the scene and that's just another one."

With all this talk about Logistics' sound it's natural to inquire about the influences that drive his musical taste and productions. As Logistics explains it's not just the world of sound and music that inspires him but the world of art and the visual too.

"Sometimes I'll have a concept that's inspired by certain things; like a little while ago I went to an exhibition in London; an Anthony Gormley installation called 'Blinding Light' and it was absolutely amazing. You walk into this room and they've got loads of water vapour in there and these really bright lights; it's basically the opposite of total darkness, it tries to mimic walking through a cloud. You walk through it and it's really unnerving because you can't tell how far things are away from you or where you are. It made me think, 'I really want to do a track that makes you feel like that' so I went and did it.

"I used to like a lot of indie stuff and grunge; Pearl Jam, Nirvana, after that I got into a lot of trip hop like Mo Wax and Ninja Tune and then after that I listened to bits of hardcore and stuff on tapes and then I got round to hearing Roni Size and LTJ Bukem. Those two really sucked me into drum & bass. After that I was hooked.

"I was thinking about it the other day, about how I came to drum & bass and it's almost like fate; I'd just read about Roni Size in a magazine and I thought yeah that sounds cool I'll go out and buy it. Then the other thing that I just read about and went out and bought was Sonz of A Loop Da Loop Era. I just read about it and for some reason I was just drawn to it and I went and bought it. I'd never done that with any other music, I always heard it first on the radio or had it recommended through word of mouth. So it really is a bit weird, like I was drawn to drum & bass for some reason. I'm sure I'm thinking too deep, but it does feel like I could never have avoided it."

It's not often you get such deep, self-meditative thoughts from the mouth of a drum & bass producer, but then as we've already established there's nothing typical about the Hospital camp and its artists. Logistics certainly isn't just another kid bashing out 16 bar womping bassline loops on his laptop; he's a credible, pensive electronic artist who expresses himself through his music and from whom anyone yearning for an escape from the humdrum of the nine till five can draw genuine inspiration.

"I couldn't imagine doing anything else, it's everything I've always wanted to do. I was always either going to do art or music. Now I get to travel the world, make music all day, be creative and get paid for it. I used to work random day jobs, 9-5 and then I'd always get home at the end of the day and just be desperate to make music and if it meant that I stayed up till 3am and then got up to go to work on a few hours sleep, then I'd do it because I was just that driven. I think that anyone who works like that, then sooner or later they'll break through. A lot of people ask how do you make it in drum & bass, the answer is you just have to really want to do it, if you really want it bad enough then it will happen."

The 'Reality Checkpoint' LP is out in March 2008. For all the latest info head to: www.hospitalrecords.com

THE INSIDERS

TIME TO BE INTRUIGED

words: Hayze photo: Andrew D Rankin

As Bristol continues to pride itself on producing some of the best UK dance music the scene has to offer, one duo that are certainly playing their part in maintaining the city's reputation are The Insiders.

The pair first met at primary school at the mere age of 4, they say that is wasn't until at least a decade after until they discovered their enthusiasm for drum and bass though, and who could have predicted at that stage that they would go on to release for such prolific labels such as: Good Looking, 31, Metalheadz, Renegade Recordings, Creative Source; the list goes on, and on! Their first ever release came out on Tribe Records and was something very different to what we now associate with The Insiders.

"Yeah that was our first ever wax, we were 18 when it was released. It came about through passing a DAT (the hi-tech medium of the time) to Dave Cridge at Tribe Records, who was on the hunt for demos. It was quite different to what we write now – scratching and hip hop vocals, that sort of thing."

Citing 2002 as a big year for them, The Insiders both agree on 'Feel The Music' as the track that began to put them on the map and with prominent figures in the scene such as Fabio & LTJ Bukem giving the track heavy rotation and getting constant rewinds it wasn't long until labels were on the phone trying to pick it up.

Renegade Recordings signed it and from then on they haven't looked back. They go on to say how this track is still their favourite release to date. Following their debut Renegade release it's no surprise that Ben & Joe think 2002 put them on the map: with tracks picked up by Defunked, Frontline, Pivotal and Bluebox (Danny C's imprint), they also had tracks licensed for CD compilations and another release on Renegade Recordings.

Moving into the studio I hear about how both members have equal inputs in what goes on in the tracks, although the roles may sometimes vary.

Ben: "I'll take the main engineer roll, laying down the beats and sounds on the PC and we split the ideas and direction part between us.

Joe: "We have equal input into the track. However, generally Ben's more of the 'hands on' man. I sit there and bark orders."

Switching the roles in the studio definitely helps keep things interesting when a duo have been producing together for a decent amount of time, Ben also adds that sampling from new sources also adds to the mix very nicely. For the producers out there The Insiders' studio setup is predominately software based; using Cubase SX 3, numerous tasty plug-ins, an EMU soundcard, Reveal monitors and a 'nice old Roland keyboard'.

Collaborations with other artists is also another attractive avenue that many musicians like to go down and after recently working with Soul Intent, Random Movement, Saburuko, Survival, and more The Insiders are definitely keeping things interesting in the studio, watch this space for the above tracks to be hitting dancefloors worldwide very soon. In the meantime if you can't wait for the above, then out soon will be tracks on Rufige, Integral, Prestige, Mac II, and Nu Directions, also their huge remix of Pepe Bradcock's 'Burning', which after constant plays from the likes of Intalex & Fabio, Kif Records could not resist and the remix will now see an official release. As well as that they will release 'Got To Maintain' on their own label: Intrigue Music.

In 2008, The Insiders will launch Intrigue as their own label, with music from themselves, Break, Survival, Eveson, Will Miles, Switch and more. They are also giving a lot of support to some up and coming talent who will feature on Intrigue. For more info check the relevant websites and MySpaces. "Demos will always be accepted". If any of you are wondering if we will see an Insiders' album in 2008 then you may have to wait a while, not to be rushed into things Ben & Joe point towards 2009 as a more appropriate time for a project that important.

Ben: "I think realistically it would be next year, an album project is something we've talked about for a while but the timing has to be right."

Joe: "We're more critical of our music now and any album project would have to be just right."

Another exciting project for the pair is their forthcoming work for Metalheadz, with a digital release of 'Meltdown' featuring Ayah on vocals and other projects for Goldie and the camp including the release of the massive, 'Cold Steel'.

When asked about which producers are keeping their eyebrows' raised and their feet moving The Insiders' attention points to the likes of Calibre, D-Bridge, Survival, Perez, Random Movement and Lynx, outside of the d'n'b bubble: Jazzanova, The Roots, and Jay Dilla, are just some of the artists that are keeping their musical tastes open, varied and interesting. "We definitely get inspired by a lot of the more musical producers, Calibre, D-Bridge, but try hard to get an original groove in the studio that hopefully doesn't sound like other artists."

If the cat wasn't already out of the bag then some of you may know that The Insiders have also gone under the name Catch 22, and with that name they had 3 tracks released on the seminal label Good Looking via the Progression Sessions mix series, something which helped build their profile immensely and gained some valued experience working and touring with the boss: LTJ Bukem.

Along with being long time producers The Insiders have been on the DJ circuit for pretty much the same amount of time. 2007 saw them play numerous events including Swerve at The End and memorable tour of America, Respect in LA being one of their highlights of the year. Leading on from '07, Ben & Joe agree that the scene in 2008 is looking stronger and healthier than ever and their DJ schedule reflects that. 2008 sees a return tour to the US, booked for early summer and an Intrigue tour in Europe due in autumn. There's also UK gigs booked constantly throughout the year.

Another big part of The Insiders' story has to be their night Intrigue. Started in 2003 to push the deeper sound of d'n'b Intrigue began life at Bar Latino twice-a-month midweek, and has now been moved on to Fridays at the Dojo Lounge. With guests such as Fabio, Storm, Marcus Intalex, D-Bridge, Survival, Alix Perez, A.I, Lynx and more it has risen to be one of the best nights in Bristol and the UK. The pair also have a weekly show on Bristol's Passion 106.2FM (online also), where you can hear live mixes from themselves, guests and recordings live from Intrigue. The Insiders are going to be an integral part of the d'n'b scene for a long time to come and with the quality of their output, the passion they put into their promotion, combined with the upcoming Intrigue Music it certainly is deserved.

To keep them even busier Ben is studying law whilst Joe runs his own IT business, and if they do get the chance to sit down and relax it seems 'Seinfield' DVDs for Ben and 'YouTube' for Joe are the weapon of choice, but after hearing what they have planned for 2008 we wonder if they will ever get time.

Booking email and contact: insiders@ukf.net
Myspace: www.myspace.com/dnbinsiders

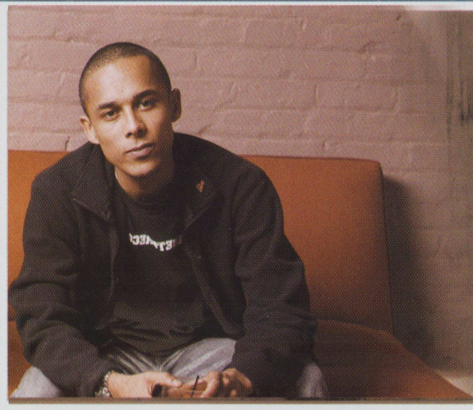
NEWS UPDATE...

INFRARED SPECTRUM

If you don't know the history of J Majik and his Infrared label then you need to school yourself son! The one-time Metalheadz golden boy who made classics such as 'Your Sound' and 'Arabian Nights' started an outlet for his own music, and that of his close associates in 1994 and over the course of the last 14 years has released some of D&B's most recognisable anthems including Future Cut's 'The Specialist', Accidental Heroes' 'Even When It Rains' and J Majik's own 'Love Is Not A Game', 'The Lizard', 'Share The Blame' and his immense remix of Hatiras' 'Spaced Invader'. So, if you missed out on all of that, fear not! Nu Urban Music is preparing itself to release a fine selection of Infrared's back catalogue, starting off with the absolutely humungous remixes of 'Capoeira' from Clipz and Marky & XRS, swiftly followed by 'The Lizard' with the original and Dark Sound Foundation remix. Look out for more back catalogue heat with such tracks as the Hazard remix of 'Keep It Coming', the Twisted Individual remix of 'Tell Me' and J Majik & Goldie's awesome classic 'Sunray'.

DOPE AMMO - ROOTS AND FUTURE

Dope Ammo is owned and run by Coco of the Drunken Masters production collective, a label which has seen some huge releases over the course of the last decade. 'Roots & Future' is the latest project from the Dope Ammo crew a celebration of 10 years of high quality, high octane releases and showcasing the very best of the label's past and some tasty snapshots of what's coming up. The CD itself will be expertly mixed by one of the legends of the scene, Nicky Blackmarket, and will feature exclusive VIP versions and brand new remixes of some of the label's biggest tunes from Taxman, Benny Page, DJ Hazard, G Dub, Baron, Nicol & Majistrate, Serial Killaz and Crystal Clear. Not only that but the Dope Ammo crew are going to include a bonus DVD jam-packed full of live footage of their 'on road' tours, interviews, studio tips and much more. Look out for the CD & Bonus DVD set to drop in May and a series of vinyl releases covering the biggest of the brand new tracks to satisfy all the black crack junkies out there!

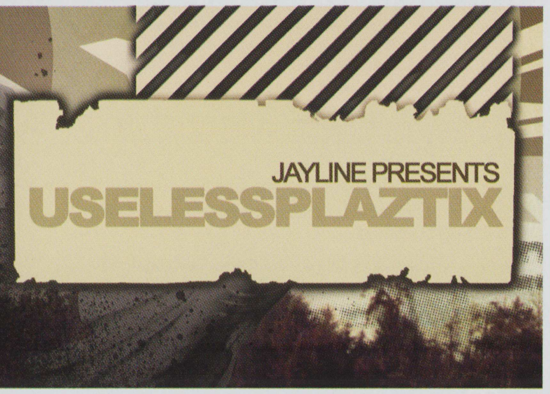


ATLANTIC CONNECTION

Los Angeles based producer Atlantic Connection is without doubt one of the biggest success stories of the past year. Since going it solo and starting his own label, Westbay Recordings, his musical output has gone from strength to strength with a string of high profile releases including the absolutely huge Hip-Hop/D&B crossover track 'Can't Destroy Love' ft. Minds One & DJ Neumenon and the latest club hit 'Grapevines' ft. Makoto. But, while you've been happily enjoying Westbay releases, never even suspecting that anything was afoot, Atlantic Connection has been creating his debut album 'Tomorrow's Not Enough' to be released across both digital and vinyl formats. With a massive collection of guest artists and vocalists including Lynx, LA Riots, Youngman, Tali, Armanni Reign, Deviant, Illy Emcee, Pouya, Repete & Lady Julz, Lady MC and more, this is a breathtaking project that encompasses Drum & Bass, Hip-Hop, Electro and everything in between. Look out for some exclusive vinyl samplers on Westbay soon and the album itself dropping in May on all good download stores. Check out www.Westbay.LA for all Westbay related updates and an audio preview of the album.

USELESSPLASTIX

Uselessplastix is the brand new Jump Up imprint from the Useless Idiots Family, better known as Jayline, Ian Dee, Hassle, Maker, Tyke and Grump. You may not have heard of some of these guys yet but you will recognise their tracks from the sets of DJs such as Micky Finn, DJ Hazard, Logan D, DJ Pleasure, Escape, Callide, Ash A-tack and many more of the Jump Up scene's best. A major part of the label's ethos is to release music from up and coming producers which, although being of an extremely high standard is often overlooked by some of the bigger labels in favour of established names with potentially weaker releases. Useless Plastix will actively work to open avenues for new artists and release their tracks alongside established names with no discrimination, just good, solid music that's born and bred to set dancefloors on fire. Look out for tracks like 'Hostile', 'Illegal Smoke', 'Next Level' and 'Scum' from the crew, all itching to make their way onto some useless plastic and into your record box. For all the info on the Useless Plastix crew check myspace.com/uselessplaztix.



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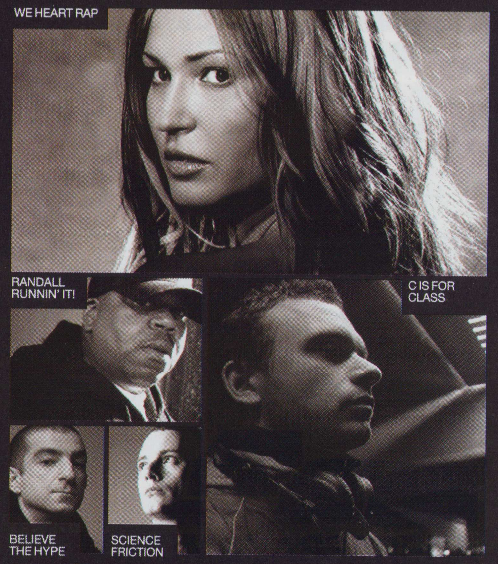

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GUILTY SIMPSON
RUGGED & RAW

words: Jesse Keene

Detroit-based rapper, Guilty Simpson, has been making a name for himself on the Stones Throw imprint for some years. Working closely with the late J-Dilla, his unique style of hardcore poetics has helped him join the ranks of his idol, Kool G Rap and other great rap pioneers. Guilty prides himself on the fact that," It ain't really about sayin' the toughest shit! It's about how you say the toughest shit." A force to be reckoned with in the hip-hop realms, ATM felt we needed to find out more about this distinctive MC. Welcome one and all to Guilty Simpson's 'Ode To The Ghetto'.

Where does the name Guilty Simpson originate?
Well, Guilty was initially my rap name. I had it for about four or five years then I heard that some dudes from out of state were saying the name of their group was Guilty so I had to add my last name to it to stop people getting confused. I really like Guilty Simpson though, it's got a ring to it and I think it's a name that people will remember. Oh yeah, it hasn't got anything to do with OJ neither!

How would you describe your lyrical content and style?
Man, it's simple - rugged, raw lyrics with style and unique cadence. I make straight up and down, 100% hardcore hip-hop and want to continue what those classic sounding MCs like Kool G Rap started.

What is the hip-hop scene like in Detroit, is it a hard place to make a name for yourself as an MC?
Well there aren't many major outlets here, so there's only so much you can do before you have to look elsewhere. I don't mean move away and never come back, but at least be able to relocate temporarily to build your name. People still think of the East coast and New York, the West coast, or, more recently, the South when it comes to hip-hop. Back in the days when Motown was here there was a direct outlet and there was a big music scene, but not so much now. Hip-hop wasn't even here in those days either, so yeah it's pretty difficult.

How did the hook up with the Stones Throw label come about and would you say that it is your home from home as far as a labels go?
Stones Throw is definitely my home away from home – those guys are based out in LA, and I love to go to LA. It's always great weather and great smoke out there! Wow! I first met Peanut Butter Wolf in Detroit when Jaylib did the electronic festival at Hart Plaza. I went down there and did 'Strapped' with Dilla and shortly after that, Dilla hit me up and said Stones Throw were interested in signing me as an artist. We didn't get to the point of actually doing the deal until after Dilla passed, but that was the initial moment I knew they were interested and it just grew outta that.

Tell us about the LP, 'Ode To The Ghetto', who is on there, how did you choose who to work with on it, and why do you feel that now is the right time to drop it as a debut album?
Man, what can I say - it's just a dope, dope album. I have MED on there, Sean P and my crew Almighty Dreadnaughtz (Almighty fears nothing). Then on the production tip we have Mr Porter, Madlib, Oh No, Black Milk, Konnie Ross, and my man Dilla dog! Dreadnaughtz are my crew in Detroit - Mr Porter and Dilla are also from Detroit, so I know them from the area - Madlib's a big part of the whole Stones Throw thing and Oh No's his brother. It's all a natural connection, rather than forced. I feel like I've paid my dues and the game needs something new, so who better but me?! I think I have something to bring to the game as opposed to just taking from the game and making cloned, 'cookie-cutter' music. I mean, some of these new rappers sound like they were made in a factory!

Will we have to wait so long for the next Guilty Simpson album and are there any other projects in the pipeline that we should be checking for?
Ha Ha! Never again! I plan on putting out music consistently until I'm done. I got Random Axe - that's me, Sean P and Black Milk. Also, Almighty Dreadnaughtz, and something with Madlib and Goon Squad, which is some Detroit hood shit for real. There's much more too.

Which artists are you feeling at the moment and why? Also, are there any artists you're not feeling and why?
Jay Electronica, Black Milk,Bishop Lamont,Pharoah Monch,Sean P, Fat Kat, Fat Ray, Scarface (still). I'm a fan of rap – there are lots more I didn't name too. As for people I'm not feeling, well, come on, I don't want to get in to that stuff.

You have a tour starting in February. What can people expect from the live shows?
A dope delivery, a voice that sounds like the record and a cool guy that's approachable. I can't wait to get out to England and Europe again. People should come and get at me after the shows. When you see me, cop that Stray Bullets mixtape from me! I'll have a bunch of them.

So there you have it, make sure you make your presence known when you see this guy play live and make sure you pick yourselves up a copy of 'Ode To The Ghetto'. It's live like the 3rd rail and is in all good music shops now. www.stonesthrow.com

JONNY L
HERE'S JONNY!

words: Mark OD pics: Leon Csernohlavek

During the history of drum and bass we've only ever seen one or two interviews with Jonny L. Considering his contribution to drum and bass music gives him the sort of deity-like status that Premier commands amongst hip-hop aficionados or Aphex Twin to electronica enthusiasts, you'd think he'd have done more interviews than Jonathon Ross. However, as we find out in this rare interview, Jonny L is a down-to-earth outsider, who turns down gigs all over the world and rarely listens to drum and bass music. Somehow he still manages to connect with the genres' artists and fanbase in a way that is fascinating.

For someone who has produced some of the most influential music drum and bass ever, Jonny L doesn't play the networking game. To describe D&B industry politics by using the word 'incestuous' is an understatement on a par with saying Chris Rock is 'not that funny'. The fact remains Jonny L (or Jon Lisners) doesn't need to scratch backs, he doesn't need to do swaps and he certainly doesn't need anyone's blessing to be part of the inner circle. Instead, he goes about his business, making tunes without all the pressures of knowing what's currently hot in the clubs and this is one of the main reasons why he doesn't sound like anyone else out there.

"I don't listen to a lot of drum and bass and I don't mix with a lot of drum and bass people either," he explains, sat on a couch in the subterranean third room at Fabric nightclub, London. "I don't mix with a lot of D&B people on purpose, I used to back in the day but now I find it helps take all the pressure off feedback. If I make something and like it, and know it's completely different to what's getting played, it frees me up creatively."

In 2008, some 15 years after his first rave hit record 'Hurt You So' changed his life overnight, Jonny L circulated a few tracks to the leading tastemakers and all of a sudden there was a buzz. DJs like Simon Bassline Smith and Goldie were playing the grimey dancefloor beast known as 'Harry', Flight was charting his ode to hardcore 'Oh Yeah' and people like Marcus Intalex and Kasra were caning his lo-fi acid-roller 'Come Here'.

Considering he's been working on the outer edges of the industry for quite a while, it's astounding to think that he can still capture people's imaginations on such a varied scale. As he explains, 'Harry' was inspired by a night out. "I went out to The End and saw Andy C playing, I'd not been out for ages, it was crazy, it was like a wall of sound, relentless non-stop earbashing. 'Harry' was designed for that." 'Come Here' was composed on his 303, "I've always loved acid, I used to be a acid raver down at Camden Palace, this was just touching on it." The retro rave vibes of 'Oh Yeah' see him going full circle, circa 1992, and was inspired by the inspiration of them all: relationships. "I had a girlfriend for 6, 7 years and she just fucked off and I was really depressed. I just got the piano out and was playing some chords and it was making me feel better. I did the backing track and dug around for a vocal and found the vocal I'd recorded a couple of years ago. The track from start to finish was a night and a half."

So, to the question that had been puzzling ATM for many years and one we finally get a chance to ask: why does Jonny not take DJ bookings? "I get inundated by promoters from America and Europe," he says describing a position that most people can only dream of. "I don't feel the need to do loads of gigs, because the music is talking. When I used to DJ that was all I wanted to do, so when I got back in the studio it was very hard to sit down and stay there. To me it's indoors or outdoors, one or the other. If I'm outdoors, I go on tour, that's it; I just get into that mode, being more sociable and that sort of thing. But also I get caveman, when I get into that mode, I don't come out of the studio. I just stay in there.

"It's something I might do," he continues on the theme, "good music is just about the music, it's not about flash Harry. I got caught up in that when I was doing pop stuff with Tru Steppers and I suddenly saw it for what it was. When I came away from that – I realised real music has nothing to do with a face and it's important to respect that. When I've accomplished everything I want to do with the music, I might go out there and pimp myself but I still haven't done what I want to do. Until I'm content there won't be much showing off."

An admirable attitude for sure, although his bank manager might have other ideas. This overwhelming dedication to the artform has seen him produce not one but two all-time classic LP's in the shape of 'Sawtooth' and 'Magnetic' as well as a slew of other cuts that have become acknowledged as some of D&B's finest moments. This contribution has not come without its cost though. "My sleeping is absolutely fucked. I don't have a normal pattern. I might as well be jet lagged. I stay up for two days, sleep again and stay up for two days. I switch from nights to very early mornings. When you're in the studio with no lights you lose track of time and that is the beauty of making music. You get the weirdness, like your on drugs but you're not on drugs."

Music lovers know all about those late nights and early mornings when the world becomes a surreal place and Jonny perfectly captures this feeling when talking about his music making. "There's a time after midnight where music sounds better, maybe between 12 and 6 in the morning. Especially between 3 and 6, that seems to be my primetime. When I switch back to working early mornings, the music just sounds completely different, it's got a different feel, it might be more technically correct but it loses something. There's something in the night that adds to it."

When pressed on the mid-to-late 90's era, where he produced drum and bass masterpieces like, 'Tychonic Cycle', 'Piper', 'See Red', 'PBX' and 'Intasound', Jonny insists, "I was completely unhappy with the quality of music. When I listen back to the 'Sawtooth' LP, I don't understand why it's liked. Some of the tunes I've made I think wow that is great, others I don't get and other people get them." By most people's standards 'Sawtooth' was and still is a monumental benchmark in drum and bass production. Taking into account his critical view of his own work, it's fair to say he's a bit of a perfectionist. "That's my downfall, I'm a perfectionist. I always try and make things perfect when they can't be," he confirms.

The following year after 'Sawtooth' he released arguably his finest longplayer and one that was acknowledged as one of the Ten Best D&B albums of all-time in ATM Magazine last year. "It was very quick to make," he explains, "I knew what I wanted to do and I had access to a couple of vocalists through XL for it. The industry was a very different beast in 1998 when Magnetic was released. "It was about being young, careless, I didn't care about bills, back then the money was great in music, sales were great, money was coming in off each single, XL were looking after me and I didn't have no worries, I was just having fun. That environment was perfect for making music."

At this stage Jonny was much more absorbed in the industry than he is in the present day. "My heart was completely in it. It was a very good era, because it was still fresh then," he reckons. With so much innovative music around at the time it can rightly be considered the golden years for drum and bass music. Jonny was certainly inspired by those around him. "Tracks like Peshay's 'Piano Tune' and Waxdoctor were so vibey and so fresh there was a real buzz about D&B, we used to go down Bar Rumba and the raves were wicked."

Next stop on the story takes us to the end of the XL years. Since signing with XL Recordings off the back of his 'Hurt You So' hit (incidentally, this was another record that was inspired by a girlfriend at the time), the relationship was far from straight forward and they were always trying to get him to move in different directions. So, when XL management told him they wanted to put a vocal on top of the mighty 'Piper' (cringe), "I was like 'Oh god we got a problem', I was like, 'You want me to sing on Piper?'." To which XL boss Richie Russell's reply was, "Yeah write a verse and a chorus." This will

be anathema to D&B purists, although the years have mellowed Jonny's opinion on the subject. "It was a fair enough comment, he was in a position where he had to take things forward and the funny thing is, if you said that to me now, I'd be like 'Yeah, sweet, not a problem.' But at the point it was a problem. Nothing commercial was what I wanted to do, I was a purist."

So, Jonny parted company with XL and left the trail-blazing label and its artists, including The Prodigy, to be his own boss. The obvious thing was to set up his own label, which he did, under the Piranha guise. Bad-boy tracks like 'Selectah' and 'The Bells' followed but all was not well with the business side of things. "That was when I realised I should have stayed with XL," he laughs. "That was when it started to go down. Suddenly having to do business just didn't work with doing the creative stuff. What I needed was someone to run it with me and take half the money. I tried to do it myself and didn't know what I was doing. That was not a good time."

The remedy for his drum and bass malaise was his whirlwind success as part of garage production outfit, Tru Steppers. Their most infamous moment came with the chart-busting, 'Out Of Your Mind', which featured none other than Posh Spice. ATM remember hearing the track at the time and laughing at the vocodered vocals, but noticing that the beats and bass were heavy for a chart record. "That was when it got fun again," he laughs warmly. "It all went pop, it was laugh after laugh. I remember doing TOTP and CDUK and being a real nuisance. I remember this guy from A1 (boyband) was looking at me funny and I started to bully him a bit. All these guys had come from Oxford backgrounds and had been trained at the Sylvia school of whatever. And I came from raver, proper musician who knows the score and you're looking at me?" he says still amazed at the cheek of it.

Being up, close and personal with Posh Spice was a real eye-opening experience. "We had private jets and travelled the world. Hanging out with Posh, seeing her lifestyle, going on tour with her, being in the cars with her and seeing all the fans going absolutely stupid over her, it was like having that fame and not having the side effects." He also met her hubby, David Beckham, someone he describes as, "A man of few words," before adding. "That's fair enough, he's in such a position that you have to protect, you have to shut off. People like me and my partner tried to get friendly with him and he was like no, it was closed off."

His contribution to drum and bass at this stage was the (by his standards) decidedly average '24 Hours' LP, which saw him sample George Bush on the militant stomper 'Let's Roll. To Jonny's credit he admits this wasn't his best work. "That was done for the wrong reasons and it wasn't put together from love and it showed. It was a valuable lesson to learn and in fact that's why I dropped doing an album this year, because some of it was great and some wasn't, so I was like no, no, no no, because I care about it."

Drum and bass suffered the loss of Jonny L's production talents for a couple of years, after this period. "I think after Tru Steppers, it all ended up really badly. It made me realise how the pop world is run, it's not about the music, it was to do with business. They get the best looking guy, the best songwriter, put it all together and get the product and put it on MTV and the little 14, 15 year olds are hooked. I was caught up in the fake shit. By the end of it, I'd had enough so I came out not really wanting to do any music and have a break."

To announce what could be called a comeback of sorts, at least in terms of him releasing drum and bass again, he concocted the now infamous sing-a-along, 'Back To Your Roots'. When he sent it round for initial feedback it was far from warm. "I sent it to industry tastemakers and my mates were saying, 'What the fuck is this? If you put this out you're going to be hated. Do not put this out'."

Now, this tune is definitely a case of Marmite drum and bass: you either love it or hate it. The funny thing is there's a little known story behind the vocals, which, as I'm writing this, is making me laugh at the thought of all the screwfaces who recite the lyrics with a stern mush, as the vocals are actually Jonny and Bradley, formerly of S Club 7. "I was singing and then the rapper on the track that was Bradley from S Club 7. He was wicked, he was a proper guy, he burnt very heavily. I was like listen mate you're in the wrong set up!" Not that Jonny was aware soon after Bradley's burning exploits ended his S Club 7 career, which was blessing for the world at large to be fair.

The subsequent Friction & K Tee remix took the vocals from this track and turned it into a simple but effective rave anthem. Once Friction enquired about it, Jonny simply agreed a fee and let him put it out on Shogun, rather than his own Mr L Records. "His label is organised properly so I knew on his label it was going to do a hell of a lot better than on mine. He sent me the finished mix and I wasn't sure, I said, 'I think it's very good for what it is but it's not my cup of tea' and he said, 'Trust me this is going to be huge'." The rest as they say is history.

A more recent sign of Jonny's return to top form was the 'This Is Hardcore' track he released through Mr L. This brooding, edgy cut was a timely reminder of his ability to create drum and bass like no other. It even motivated Goldie to call from Australia in an attempt to sign it. Another sign of his resurgence was his joint effort with one of the most innovative production duos in D&B right now: Instra:mental. The track, 'Output 1-2' was a fine example of drum and bass science and was put out by longtime friend Rico on his Darkestral label. "Rico I've known since I left XL, he was how I started the Piranha label (Rico distributed Piranha through SRD for him). He's a cool guy because he's a serious music lover and he's a nice guy, I've got a lot of time for him."

There was only one request from Rico when putting Jonny together with his Instra:mental charges. "Rico said, 'The rule here is that we slow it down, its got to be 170 BPM' so I was like 'Fuck off' 'cos a lot of stuff I do is at 180BPM." Those that have a deep appreciation of Jonny's work will know all too well that his music is cut that little bit faster than the average. If you've ever mixed his music, you will have clocked that the pitch control has to slide down the scale to get it in time with most D&B. Is there any reason for this? "I don't know why," he says genuinely at a loss to explain, "I love slow stuff as well, I think when I hear 170 BPM it doesn't excite me, but for dancing, clubbing too, it's got to be 180BPM."

Never one to conform to what the rest of the world is doing, long may Jonny L continue to do his own thing. Drum and bass is most definitely a better place for his contribution.

ATM would like to thank Celine, Danna and the engineer at Fabric nightclub for their help with this piece.

www.myspace.com/jonnylrecords

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CHIBUKU
COMMIX
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D BRIDGE
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DILLINJA
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DJ ASSAULT
DJ CRAZE & DJ KLEVER
DJ HYPE
DJ LYNX
DJ YODA
DOC SCOTT
DROP THE LIME
DYNAMITE MC
EBONY BONES (LIVE)
ED RUSH
FABIO
FATS
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FREQ NASTY
G DUB
GANJA TEK
GET FAMILIAR
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HAZARD
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MACPHERSON
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MARY ANNE HOBBS (RADIO 1)
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MC MAD RUSH
MCs FLOW DAN
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Compiled by: Danny Shutdown & Ben Hobson

leaders of the nu skool

LEADERS OF THE NU SKOOL: LABEL SPECIAL!
These days it seems there's a host of new labels being launched every week, so we decided to cherry-pick some of the best in our label special. The only premise being that they are relatively new, they've had no more than a handful of releases and they're labels that are coming up with the goods on a regular basis. Overall, we think we've selected a fair spread of styles and sounds and if you're looking for the hottest action in the underground music industry, you'd be well advised to take notice of these labels. Shouts for future LONS: editor@atm-mag.com

DEF:LTD

Who runs the label? DEF:LTD is the sister label to Sudden Def Recordings and is under the control of DJ Inter & Bridge.

Why did you set it up? Throughout Sudden Def's 10 years we have allowed the imprint to be versatile in the sound it releases, so DEF:LTD was born to solely cater for the harder tech beats that are currently flowing into the HQ from the producers that work with us.

What is the ethos behind the label? Apart from the musical direction, the ethos remains the same for DEF:LTD that we have always had: to release quality beats from both established and new artists alike.

What has been the most important release to date? Probably the first one, we're only on number 4. Masheen made sure the label started on a high note!

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? First and foremost DEF:LTD is a record label, therefore it goes without saying that each single will be on vinyl. When we started out in this game there was no such thing as an MP3 or CDR's (remember DAT tapes?), so like many from that era, vinyl is a must. This doesn't mean we don't embrace the new technology and not only do we sell our music online using this format, we have been known to purchase the occasional track by this method for our own pleasure. The control of digital sales has improved a lot and it seems that more people are happy to pay for an MP3, rather than use illegal versions.

What are the labels forthcoming releases? We have just released the first single from Sleeper Cell on the imprint and this will be followed shortly by a Skynet & NC-17 collaboration entitled 'Mean Streets'.

What artists will feature in the future? The artist base includes Masheen, Stu C4C, Amaning, Kano & Tenebra, Skynet, Subterra, and NC-17, but is forever growing.

For people who haven't already, why should they check out your label? Why not? They might even like it!

www.suddendef.com / www.myspace.com/defltd

DARKESTRAL

Who runs the label? Rico Drkstr AKA Mr. Darkestral

Who else is involved with the label? We have a publicist, Martian Dialekt, who tends to deal with any web based interfacing with the public, he is quite disingenuously net-phobic, so has to be coaxed into action and is a dormant presence most of the time, but he is uniquely poised to talk of Darkestral things in my absence.

Why did you set it up? I have a deep, personal love for a period of time in this music's history that I felt was left stranded by the roadside a decade ago. But it was not the right time up until now to launch it, as the cyclical nature of the music hadn't reached a point where the ideas might have a chance to be accepted, as they come from a leftfield stance, and even though the impact at present is 'cultish' it is a better time now than at any previous juncture to be administering a dose of Darkestral influence onto the musical landscape.

What is the ethos behind the label? The label was born from many years of visualisation, research, voyeurism and conceptual analysis of the essence of what it was that drum & bass has meant on a personal level. Filmic / visual colours and tones/textures are integral to the music getting signed, if I can't see a whole cinematic panorama open up when I close my eyes during listening then it doesn't make the grade. The basis of the sound of the first releases has come from setting one pivotal point: the tempo is strictly 170bpm.

What has been the most important release to date? The first release Instra:mental's `Comanche' / 'The Chamber' laid out the blueprint for a direction of where and what the label was to be about and what it wanted to say.

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? At present you will only find our music on vinyl as this is the medium that the music has been mastered for first and foremost. Stuart Hawkes at Metropolis Mastering in London is a key element in the label due to his exceptional ability to get the best sound from the music at the mastering stage, he makes the vinyl sound richer and lusher than any CD and is comparable as a skilled technician to a tailor on Saville Row.Each release on Darkestral has been released with a special version on coloured vinyl, or with silver foil blocking on the sleeve to make the purchaser feel that a little bit extra has been added to justify them parting with their currency. Digital music and downloads are on the agenda in the near future, as this is an area that isn't going to go away and there are people who only wish to purchase music in this manner, and we don't want to deny them a chance to purchase our music legally. All ranges of files will be available from MP3 upwards wherever possible. Ideally we would like people to choose WAV/AIFF format to be able to hear the music as close to how it was recorded as possible, in the best possible quality without unnecessary compression issues. At the same time, choice is there for those who just want the music for portable players / phones.

What are the labels forthcoming releases? Next up at the end of April will be the continued emergence of Instra:mental with the double-a side release `Rogue' and `Sakura' (Darkestral 003), followed by another Instra:mental double header in June which at this stage will involve the stunning `Thugtronika' and a serious piece of spacious-funk unlike any of their previous work, currently residing under the working title `Codename:elephant'.

What artists will feature in the future? At present there are conferences being held in cyberspace with possible sentinels that may co-opted into the Darkestral organisation, Mu:te is one such character who understands the concept. The label is always open to others who feel they might be able to articulate our vision, and of course the relationship with flagship artists Instra:mental is set to continue as they grow in stature.

For people who haven't already, why should they check out your label? The label has a sense of adventure in a climate where cloning is prevalent, if our inquisitive nature and sound interests you then feel free to investigate further, we aim to release only music with longevity, quality, style and innovation.

www.darkestral.com
www.myspace.com/darkestralrecordings

PUNCH DRUNK

Who runs the label? Bristol based producer and DJ Peverelist, who also works at Bristol vinyl hot spot, Rooted Records.

Who else is involved with the label? It's a solo effort.

Why did you set it up? To provide a platform for Bristol-based producers, in what was then a very London-centric scene. I wanted to get some of the music out there that was being produced in the micro dubstep scene that is Bristol.

What is the ethos behind the label? Next Generation Bristol Sound System Music.

What has been the most important release to date? The next release is always the most important release. Pinch 'Dr Calson' b/w '136 trek' should hit the streets around April this year.

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? Punch Drunk is available on 12" vinyl and digital download. From a personal point of view, vinyl is definitely the format for DJing and home listening too, but you can't carry your 1210s on the bus to work.

What are the labels forthcoming releases? Next 12" is 'Dr Calson' / '136 trek' both by Pinch.

What artists will feature in the future? Bristol's finest. There is a whole new generation of beat makers coming through so expect some new names as well as the more established artists too.

www.myspace.com/punchdrunkrecords

2ND DROP RECORDS

Who runs the label? Markle and JBliss. Two bessie mates, one who resides in the Royal County of Berkshire and one who escaped to the big smoke.

Who else is involved with the label? Artist wise: Ramadanman, Rusko, Clouds, Sully Shanks, Goldfinger/ Twisted (Dutty Dubz) and LD. Design wise: Dugz and Ben. Tour support: DB.

Why did you set it up? We can't produce, play drums or yodel (although JBliss is a mean triangle player), so next best thing was to run a label. Markle's previous Live Recordings imprint shut in 2007 and 2nd Drop took up the mantel. There was simply too much good music out there at the time, not enough of it seeing the light of day.

What is the ethos behind the label? Good music that isn't confined to one style, vibe or ethos. We like bangers, deep rollers, spaced out techy tracks; as long as the quality is high. We try and offer contrasting styles on our 12's, light with dark, melodic with grot, but most importantly we are not limiting ourselves to just the dubstep market. The name was inspired by going to raves, especially DMZ and FWD, and hearing big tracks by Mala and Skream which had killer, next dimension 2nd Drops. Simple.

What has been the most important release to date? All of them. Every release has received Radio One and big name DJ support. Although Rusko's 'William H Tonkers' has been our biggest seller, if that makes any difference.

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? Vinyl 12", one track each side only, for maximum sound quality. We are doing digital, as there is a demand for our product. We think it's only fair that fans of the music that don't have turntables can still enjoy it.

What are the labels forthcoming releases? 2ndrp12004: Goldfinger / Twisted – 'Contact' b/w Sully Shanks – 'Give Me Up' (March). 2ndrp12005: LD – TBC b/w Sully Shanks – 'Give Me Up' (LD Remix) (May)

What artists will feature in the future? Definitely more international artists. There are some very strong producers coming out of Finland right now. But the rest is a secret.

For people who haven't already, why should they check out your label? Sick music, sick artwork and sick label. That's a lot of sickness!

www.2nddroprecords.com

SYMMETRY

Who runs the label? I do (Break).

Who else is involved with the label? I get help and tips from Fierce & Squire and a few others about some of the management side of things, but so far have only released my own tunes on the label.

Why did you set it up? I've always dreamt of having my own label, and in reality I can be in charge of how it all runs, so the whole process of putting a record out can be much quicker and easier, but there's more pressure to get it right as you can't really blame anyone else.

What is the ethos behind the label? Quality firstly, and when I first thought of starting it I wanted to always have a varied release, not having two sides that sound the same. I was keen to do B-side tunes, rather than AA's, it doesn't mean the tunes worse because it has a B in front of it, just a different vibe.

What has been the most important release to date? It's hard to say, getting the first release out was a big step because that was the start, but 'The Drone' seemed to get a pretty good reaction, so I'm really pleased that came on Symmetry.

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? I've started setting up the digital download, as of now the Symmetry releases are available on Beatport and Juno. It's not my main focus for the release, I love vinyl still, and I'm really into the artwork side of things, and personally I much prefer to own a real CD or vinyl than an MP3 icon. But, I know that a lot of people overseas cant afford, or get hold of the export vinyl, and for back catalogue collectors the MP3 sites are an amazing source.

What are the labels forthcoming releases? 'Surroundings'/'Lost and Found' is out in the shops, and I'm working on my album at the moment which I'm planning to get out this year on Symmetry. There should be another single out in a month or two I just haven't decided on the tracks yet.

What artists will feature in the future? Hopefully everyone I work with regularly (Silent Witness, Survival, Fierce , Nico & Kyo). And I've been doing tracks with SP & Die - and there's loads of other people I'd love to get involved in the future.

For people who haven't already, why should they check out your label? I try to mix up the flavours, so there's a bit of something for everyone. And I only release music I love, so hopefully others might too.

website coming / www.stholdings.co.uk

leaders of the nu skool

SECOND CITY

Who runs the label? Two of us really. Myself, Mr Roly (Roland) and my partner DJ Alpha (Ben).

Who else is involved with the label? Lots of people in a way but mainly it's our artists because without them we wouldn't be here. I'm also good friends and in regular contact with other DJs and label owners, people like Micky Finn, Swan-E, Phantasy, Kenny Ken and other important background figures such as Tobie Scopes and Phil Wells without all these guys advice and support it would have been a real struggle to get Second City off the ground.

Why did you set it up? As a DJ & MC duo me and Ben were always getting sent lots of really good tracks by new artists to play out. Most of the tunes were unsigned so we saw the opportunity to release them and give the artist and the tunes a real home. We then recruited artists and made them part of a family who would network their music through the right channels and push them to further their career and continue to help them grow and develop as the label does.

What is the ethos behind the label? We wanted to create a label that new and upcoming artists could showcase their music and feel like they were part of a growing family that intends to keep building a strong name for itself by releasing consistently strong tunes that main room DJs will play.

What has been the most important release to date? The first of course! That's where the journey began, but they have all been strong in their own right, getting played across the board depending on the DJs own style and tastes.

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? We use Nu Urban for our distribution who take care of all that. To be honest MP3's are passed around and swapped too much, you don't hear that happening with vinyl do ya?! Nuff said!

What are the labels forthcoming releases? It's all go for 2008 - we started the year with SCR004, the long awaited debut release from Hollywood's very own Heavy Hittaz, then its the Duballey boys again for 005. Following that comes two huge Zen remixes of Picto's 'Ravin Rudeboy'. Number 007 is Callide on the A-side with Picto & Heavy Hittaz on the flip then for SCR008 we have the 'War Torn' remixes by Pleasure and Evol and in for 009 is Mutated Forms with 'Stardust' backed by a heavy remix from Original Sin - as you can gather its gonna be mental!

What artists will feature in the future? We're currently in talks with artists such as KG, Connecta and Lyptikal and we still have forthcoming remixes from artists like Modified Motion, Taxman, Majistrate and that's not even mentioning the rest of the family big guns like Kulprit, DJ Rusty, Erbman and new boys like Prestige and 4Q.

For people who haven't already, why should they check out your label? We're a label that over the last 12 months has grown and grown due to the support of the massives and fans. We're a big family spread across the globe and offer a home to new producers and artists who wish to join. With new people checking us out and seeing what we're about the word spreads and we can continue to build a label that unites a love for jump up D&B all over the world.

www.myspace.com/secondcityrecords

LIFTED MUSIC

Who runs the label? Chris Renegade and Spor developed the concept back in August 2006, and began to put the wheels in motion from that point on. Based just north of London, 25 year old Chris Renegade handles the initial A&R and everyday admin, whilst 23 year old Spor works on music and pushes his creative influences.

Who else is involved with the label? The artists of course play a big part of the label, as well as the production and manufacturing expertise of Chris and Andrew at ST Holdings. There are plenty of people around the world always helping out with Lifted, which is always appreciated.

Why did you set it up? At the same time that Chris decided to leave his A&R and management role at the TOV Music group, he wanted to progress with his work and cement his role in the scene as an individual. The original concept was based around a handful of artists Chris had brought in through the Barcode and Hardware imprints, who he felt he had faith in their attitudes, musicality and traits. Following this, Chris spoke to his new found friends and artists, and the label was born.

What is the ethos behind the label? Progressiveness is the main foundation Lifted was built upon. The ideology of pushing music forward, both in musicality and technicality is also major part of the label. Strong visual concepts play a significant part, whilst they at Lifted thrive to maintain the perfect complexion; they believe it's critical to the foundations of maintaining a leading label.

What has been the most important release to date? Lftd003 in showcasing the initial collective of the line up that featured on the debut release, so the benchmark has once again shown. Lifted's high-end capability. With that said, LFTD001 holds significance as the first release catapulting Lifted to the forefront of the scene.

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? ST Holdings, The Lifted Music online shop, and digital coming soon on iTunes, Beatport & DNB Arena. Technology is in a constant progression. Although there used be allot of money in selling vinyl, there's not much at all anymore - it's about the music! If label manager and artist's have a problem with it, it's normally because they don't make much money in digital downloads at the moment. Vinyl is more of a product, that's good for the consumer to feel more like they own something from the label and physically supporting the artist, but digital download are better quality and you can't scratch them. They both have their pros and cons, but as long as they sound good, who cares!

What are the labels forthcoming releases? LFTD003, 'From the Inside Out', was recently released, and has been receiving mass feedback from the scenes finest. Next up is Apex 'Wall Of Sound' EP, feat. tracks such as 'Same Old Blues' & 'Hench'.

What artists will feature in the future? The Upbeats have been scheduled to remix a track from the 'Prologue' EP, with negotiations being finalised at the moment. Other major named artists have also been pencilled in for future productions for Lifted, so keep your ears open for the developments that will follow.

For people who haven't already, why should they check out your label? Its progression, it's new, it's some of the best engineered music in the dance scene, and it's all done with a next level touch of perfection. Each artist has a distinct trait to bring to their music and the label, something which is unfortunately becoming a rare sight within the current scene.

www.liftedmusic.com

INTEGRAL RECORDS

Who runs the label? Artificial Intelligence.

Who else is involved with the label? Just us.

Why did you set it up? As we have so much talent closely around us and many are happy to work with us.

What is the ethos behind the label? As long as it reaches the mark of approval we are looking for, any type of style.

What has been the most important release to date? Zero Tolerance feat. Steo – Refusal.

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? Vinyl / MP3. We try and cater for all so vinyl / CDs for comps, and downloads which are becoming increasingly popular. What is the point of fighting a losing battle? Best to be keep a step ahead and think about the future.

What are the labels forthcoming releases? Music from Lomax, Zero T , Survival, Saburoko, Heist Calibre, colabs via AI to name but a few. Look out for artist albums and compilations in the pipeline.

For people who haven't already, why should they check out your label? Whatever style of D&B you are into, we aim and deliver to give something for everyone which sticks out above the rest in our eyes.

myspace.com/integralrecords

DIRTY HABIT

Who runs the label? Jason Bull (Mackie from Afghan Headspin / Resonant Evil).

Who else is involved with the label? Nu Urban: Andy, Tobie, Gordy & Jeryl (Manufacturing / Distribution / Accounting / Press).

Why did you set it up? No other reason than to showcase great music and support up & coming producers.

What is the ethos behind the label? Every track released on Dirty Habit is an A side that works in the dance, the label favours no one particular style, just well crafted music.

What has been the most important release to date? They are all important in their own right! Well received by DJs and music press alike. Camo & Krooked's – 'Lost Out There' is getting a lot of attention at the present and we look forward to its release.

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? We sell vinyl & digital. There are so many points of view on the subject. The facts are that vinyl sales are decreasing, digital sales are increasing as a whole, and the view that music is free seems to be expanding. As a label we try and encourage vinyl sales, and believe there is still a market out there for this great format that encourages the art of DJing and also helps the fight against piracy.

What are the labels forthcoming releases? DH001 - Dash & Samurai - Aneurysm / Agent Alvin - The Void (out now)
DH002 - Subsenix vs. Kiro feat. Essence - Drop In The Ocean / Krooked - Serious Sound (out on promo)
DH003 - Krooked & Rob.STP – Feelings / Camo & Krooked – Lost Out There (forthcoming)
DH004 - Camo & Squash - Don't Push Me / Camo & Krooked - No More Running (forthcoming)

What artists will feature in the future? Camo, Krooked, Squash, Rob STP, we hope to do a deal with a new producer called Dilemn (big in nu-skool breaks), Afghan Headspin, Ben Sage, Subsonik, Agent Alvin and many more, yet discovered producers.

For people who haven't already, why should they check out your label? Why not? Fresh & original, uplifting, well crafted & produced, dancefloor bangers!

www.myspace.com/dirtyhabitworldwide

WESTBAY

Who runs the label? Atlantic Connection is the creative force and Jeryl looks after the A&R and business side.

Who else is involved with the label? Across both Westbay and Westbay International you have: LA Riots, Makoto, Zero Tolerance, Lynx, Tali, Armani Reign, Beta 2, Spectrasoul, Random Movement, Youngman, Illy Emcee, Redeyes, Kemst, Deviant, Minds One, DJ Neumenon, Concept & Shnek, Kubatko, Mikrob, Jo-S, Pouya, McClain Sullivan, Utah Jazz. I hope we didn't forget anyone!

Why did you set it up? To act fearlessly in the decay of the traditional music industry, to build a family of loyal artists with a strong fanbase and to earn a bit of cash doing something we love.

What is the ethos behind the label? We want to show the world that you can achieve a lot more than most people think within drum and bass and beyond. The label started out as a D&B imprint whose primary concern was to release vinyl singles, but as time has gone on we've come to realise that we shouldn't be afraid to try out all styles and sources of revenue, and we're not scared to stare down the barrel of the elitist drum & bass fanboy gun.

What has been the most important release to date? On Westbay, Atlantic Connection's 'Can't Destroy Love' ft. Minds One & DJ Neumenon has been absolutely massive while Random Movement's 'Believe No Other' is currently doing the damage on Westbay International (Crissy Criss currently has it as his ring tone… big up yourself Crissy!).

What formats are you using to distribute music for e.g. vinyl / digital download? And what are your views on this subject? We would release our music in text format lovingly carved into a piece of marble if people want to purchase it in that way. A format is just a format; it's the music and the people who support it that's important to us.

What are the labels forthcoming releases? Well by the time this goes to print Atlantic Connection's debut album will be nearly ready for you to get your mitts on. It features a host of different musical styles, ranging from hip hop to electro and, of course, plenty of musical drum and bass. Look out also for the LA Riots remix of 'Rocksteady' and some really good dubstep from an undercover D&B agent.

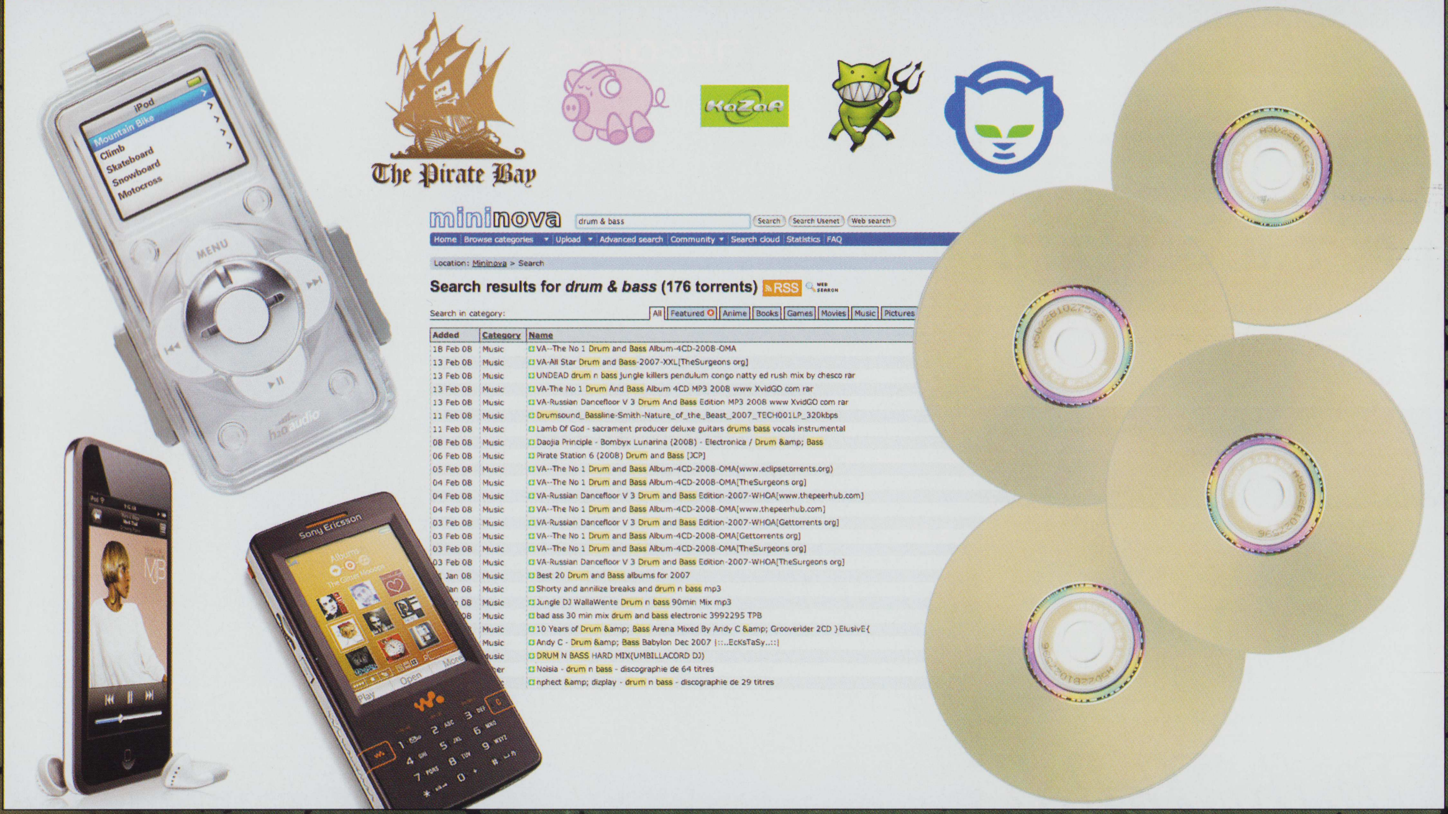
What artists will feature in the future? Anyone with talent, musical ability and a good sense of humour is welcome to join our family (for a small administration fee).

For people who haven't already, why should they check out your label? If you have an open musical mind you will appreciate what we're doing, and if you don't have an open musical mind you will probably appreciate 'some' of what we're doing.

www.myspace.com/westbayrecordings

online culture

Words: Alex Deadman



DIGITAL PIRACY PART 1
THE BIG CHANGE

Piracy and technology have long gone hand in hand. The digital music revolution, for all its merits, has thrust every genre into a file-sharing free for all. Artists, who once dreamed of somehow finding a way to get their music 'out-there' have been left desperately trying to reel it in. The causes are clear but what is the actual impact?

The early days of rave are often viewed through rose-tinted (or E-tinted) glasses but as anyone involved in the scene at that time will tell you, it was a lawless era. From a piracy point of view, the music was almost completely built on unlicensed samples. The outfits putting out the tracks and promoting the raves were mostly unregistered companies. For the average raver, the only comparable action to today's online file-sharing was the furtive compact cassette network. Some tapes had to be pirate copies like recordings of live radio broadcasts from Kool FM or the BBC's 1 'In The Jungle' show. However, the main focus in tape culture was always on recordings of live events. Copies were easy and cheap to make but an original tape-pack was always preferred. A true tape connoisseur would ideally have the original and steer clear of dubious fifth-hand copies. The truth is that tape-packs regularly sold-out, whether or not the tunes played in the pack were licensed is another story. Artists generally turned a blind eye to distribution of their mix tapes for promotional reasons.

Although I'm sure someone did it, getting free access to a vinyl and then copying it to cassette in order to play in a set was virtually unheard of. The concept of being able to obtain tracks for free, without someone's consent and use them in a DJ set was absurd. People were forced out into the record shops to buy vinyl if they wanted to truly connect with the scene. Piracy was rife at this time but it was analogue piracy and largely it happened within the industry. Piracy at a consumer level was not a significant issue. The revenue generated from artists selling their music, on vinyl format, built the careers of individuals and nurtured the scene as a whole.

The dawn of the MP3 was inevitable. As data transfer became faster and faster the file-sharing network was born in the form of the now infamous Napster web-site. The MP3 has always been a consumer product. Based on the principle of getting the best sound quality without needing a large file, the MP3 was sufficiently small enough for sites to make money through it's free distribution. In the music industry of today, the MP3 has become an accepted and embraced media. Initially it was the opposite. Like a new designer drug, laws had to be quickly shaped and implemented to cope with this new illegal product. Snowballing faster than YouTube's hottest viral-video, file sharing networks like Kazaa sprung up and within a short time a huge amount of copyrighted music was and still is available online. The major record labels saw their sales plummet and reacted offensively leading to the closure of many networks.

The MP3 and the massive potential of the internet for file-sharing has placed a huge responsibility on the consumer. Copied tapes, videos and computer games had been commonplace for many years and no one really cared about the ethical dimension. When music across-the-board became available for free download everyone jumped at the opportunity. While any major record company might fail to win the ethical battle with it's listeners over piracy, the genres covered in ATM, still dominated by independent or/and producer run record labels had a much stronger case against the downloaders. With d'n'b already reeling somewhat in the late 90s and early noughtie's the new form of piracy, spawned by the 'net, posed two major problems.

To articulate the issue, ATM spoke to Red One, a veteran of the UK scene and one of the three people involved in the creation of now legendary Ram Records in 1992. The first problem is the more obvious issue of revenue. Until relatively recently the CDJ was not a permanent fixture in a club and there was no way of playing out with a pirated tune unless expensive CDJ turntables were bought. So although the track did not replace the vinyl it satisfied the listener who wants a vinyl only in order to listen to the track. For this sort of user the MP3 was a godsend, cutting through the clutter and awkwardness of a large vinyl collection.

The problem stated simply by Red One as, "Robbing from your own" is obvious. Once it became obvious that vinyl sales were slowing down the industry woke-up to the fact that action had to taken quickly to avoid their tracks losing all commercial value. Many reacted with indignation and anger toward downloaders but some of the more savvy enterprises realised that not everyone wanted vinyl and people would pay for their MP3s. The downloaders weren't simply responding to free availability but to a new media that they wanted to get involved with. It's for this reason that Ram Records was one of the first labels to embrace legitimate digital downloads, taking the plunge by making the music available on many different sites, an act that some feared would encourage piracy. Due to the fact that file-sharing relies on low-quality (128 kbps) MP3s, the high quality downloads offered through legitimate digital downloads added to the ethical factor in persuading listeners to go legit. The general trend of downloading for free has been turned around. Digital downloads have performed better than anyone in the d'n'b industry expected.

The second and less obvious problem is that pirate MP3s are countering the exclusivity of a track when it is on pre-release (often referred to as a dubplate). Red One described tunes as sounding old before they even hit the shelves. The network of DJs and producers who would once take DAT recordings of tunes to the dubplate house every week, now have a serious flaw in their security due to the tracks existing on a non-physical format. Up and coming DJs are often struggling to get to grips with the dubplate structure but there is a purpose to it, beyond the nepotism it is often accused of. If someone sticks an obviously unreleased dub that has somehow found its way onto a file-sharing site in a promotional mix they will definitely get pulled up about it, often by other DJs who have chosen to follow the route of obtaining dubs through the legal routes. This sort of self-policing helps with this particular problem but not against playing pirated tunes that are on public release.

The piracy issue will continue to dominate online music. Part 2 details some of the murkier piracy practices taking place today, who's benefiting and who's losing out. I'll also try to define the piracy of tomorrow.

in the lab

Words: Ben Willmott Pic: Zen Inoya

IN THE LAB WITH SIGMA

Sigma have been producing the goods for a while now, with tracks like 'High Top' (Viper) and 'El Presidente' (Bingo) showing when it comes to uptempo dancefloor vibes they've got them in abundance. This year they've got loads of beats forthcoming and their remix of the all-time classic 'Music Box' is already an absolutely huge club track, so we thought we'd take a peak inside their studio and find out exactly they cook up their beats.

What equipment do you use in the studio?
We are currently running two quad core power PC's with Nuendo and various plug-ins. Our soundcard is an Emu Proteus, and occasionally an MBox. Our monitors of choice are the Mackie HR824's, but we also own Genelecs, Tannoy's, and Behringer's. Other kit includes: Macbook, Alesis Midiverb, Novation Nova, A Station and Roland Jupiter 6.

How do you start making a new tune?
We usually begin by writing the beats in a separate project file because we use a large number of different original breaks and hits to form the final beat, which we then bounce and import into a new project. This helps to keep the project files tidy, and also gives the break a 'unified' sound. When we first started writing tracks, we used to use a lot of compression and EQ on the Drum Bus and individual channels, but have started to move away from doing this as we feel it makes the drums sound very synthetic.

Once we are happy with the sound of the drums, we search for a sound or sample to create a vibe for the track. We then create a bunch of presets on VST's, such as Massive, Blue, Z3ta, and Trilogy, and work the main riffs and musical elements of the track. When writing basslines we always try to keep them between the keys of F and A as these are the most resonant frequencies on a big sound system. Once we have created the main musical elements within the track we sketch out a structure, which will usually consist of a DJ-friendly 32-64 bar intro (very important to bear this in mind) and work on building sound effects and other elements to add to the overall sound of the track, and to help to create different moods, i.e. build ups, etc. Once we have the arrangement and the majority of the track written, we work on the mixdown and make sure each of the main elements are EQ'ed correctly, (we recommend Waves REQ, and Sony Oxford's). When mixing down our track we will bounce a few different versions and cross reference with a similar style track, (whilst using the PAZ frequency analyser), as this helps to guide us to how the track should sound.

Where do you gather samples from?
We have been collecting samples for a good few years, so we have thousands of vinyl, CDs, and hard drives full of music and interesting sounds. There are also loads of cool web sites to find breaks and sound bytes. One of the best resources for this is the grid forum on Dogs On Acid. Alternatively, we try to create new samples by loading a few VST's together in a chain and process them using various plug-ins, such as Waves, Sonnox, Sonalksis, Camel Audio, Ohmforce, PSP, and Ik Multimedia.

What's your favourite software or equipment?
We use Kontakt 3 as our core sampler, together with a list of VST's, such as the Massive, Reaktor, Reason, and Waves. It all depends on the tune in hand. Reason itself has two great synths that can be manipulated to create some impressive sounds.

Explain the process of remixing 'Music Box'?
'Music Box' was always one of our favourite tracks and we wanted a version of this to play in our sets. We'd tried playing out the original in the past, but it didn't hold up in the club next to newer material. We wanted to maintain the vibe of the original, but also bring it up to date, adding fatter drums, breaks and basslines. We started off by getting a good quality version of the original track and isolated the core samples so they can be used in the remix. We then pieced the parts together and replicated the original bassline using the Trilogy VST, pitch bending a simple sine wave across an interval of a 5th. We then added extra sounds, FX and breaks to add the new school 'sheen' and extra splash. In mixing down the track we side chained the kick and the sub, as the mix was sounding a little muddy. This in turn helped to create more headroom, and a louder mixdown, whilst maintaining the presence of the sub throughout the track.

Who tends to do what in the studio?
We generally take it in turns at the controls, and the main studio is set up with two networked PC's, with a massive bank of samples accessible to both computers. One of the computers is running the Rompler side of the studio and holds a massive orchestral sample library. We like to use real strings and samples in our tracks as they seem to make the track seem more 'full'. When one of us is working on the main studio PC, the other will be either working sounds, samples, or handling other sides of the business. We often leave a track a few weeks before opening it back up again to complete it. We find that your ears can sometimes deceive you after a long session so it is good to let them rest. The internet has made it easy to make tunes together without even having to be in the same room. Sometimes an idea may get started in one of our studios and the project file AIM'ed across to the main studio to work on as a unit.

What are your top studio tips?
Always cross reference your work as you go along - after a while your ears can play tricks on you. Use Frequency Analysis when mixing down your tracks - an essential tool for ensuring every element sits in its correct frequency range. Don't overcomplicate the mix - simplicity is the key. Take a break.

How do you get the best possible mixdowns?
By cross referencing and frequency analysis. To be honest, we find it very hard to settle on mixdowns. Generally we try to mix the track down as we go along, and, at the final stages, turn it up and see what elements stick out. We are never 100% happy with our mixdowns; there's always something that's not quite right! A final tune doesn't need to be especially loud when being sent to the mastering house. As long as the mix is well balanced, the mastering engineer can pump the track using equipment that is far superior to that of the home studio. There isn't any one rigid way of working; it's just what works best for you.

If you have any queries or other questions, please send us a message on www.myspace.com/sigmauk

Contact: Nookie@atm-mag.com

Welcome to another **TECH SUPPORT!** This is the one and only place to find my personal selection of DJ and music production kit for your studio. In this issue we feature two state-of-the-art products from Numark, the latest version of the incredible Kontakt sampler, Image-Line's contribution to the ever-expanding computer DJ market with Deckadance, a sample CD in the shape of A-Class D&B 4 the Headz and the excellent MP3 watermark program with Tag & Rename. Not only that, there's also my guide to the best free plug-ins on the net.

NUMARK
TTi USB Turntable

Numark bring us the latest in their USB turntable range with the TTi. The main feature is the very straight forward way of recording your vinyl records direct onto your iPod. It has a built in iPod dock that sits neatly on the corner of the turntable and the included software helps you archive your record collection to CD or MP3.

TTi's integrated line-level output allows quick, easy connection to any mixer for instant playback from your iPod or vinyl records and 10% pitch control is included to enable adjustment of playback speed.

TTi includes EZ Vinyl Converter 2 (PC) and EZ Audio Converter (MAC); an easy way to record and convert vinyl directly to iTunes. EZ Vinyl Converter 2 features Gracenote MusicID technology, which analyses your vinyl and automatically retrieves album, artist and song information for you. EZ Audio Converter lets you easily enter track information. On Mac or PC, you can digitally archive your collection in just a few mouse clicks.

TTi is ideal for first-time DJs or anyone who wants to archive their vinyl to MP3.

Price: from £150

For more information please visit:
www.numark.com

NUMARK
NS7 Controller

The NS7 Controller from Numark is a dedicated controller for Serato ITCH. It ships with Serato ITCH and comes ready to control the DJ software of your choice, including Serato ITCH and Numark's very own CUE DJ software. There are loads of additional assignable MIDI controllers that provide unprecedented software compatibility and user customisations.

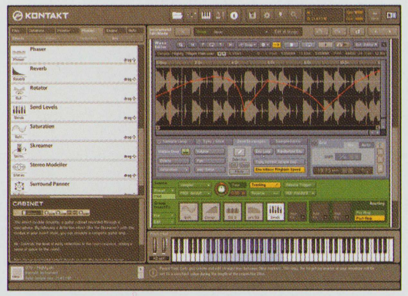
The main features are the two high-torque, motorized 7" standard platters which gives you a genuine vinyl look and feel of standard turntables (even if they are a little bit smaller!), the interface provide pinpoint response with illuminated easy-to-find controls to help you to perform in any lighting conditions.

The NS7 Controller sends MIDI over USB at two to three times the normal speed, at an extremely high resolution for the most accurate and precise software control available, while remaining 100% MIDI compliant. Custom controls are included for navigating your library without need for a mouse or keyboard.

Features: Adjustable high-torque, direct-drive motors with 7" vinyl, 2-in, 4-out. 24-bit USB 2.0 audio interface. High speed, double precision MIDI controls (compatible with any MIDI software), rock solid CP-PRO crossfader. All metal construction, extensive looping, cue point and track selection controls. Additional assignable controls include 8 rotary, 8 triggers and 2 mini sliders, Audiophile-quality and analogue circuitry.

Price: TBA

For more information please visit:
www.numark.com



NATIVE INSTRUMENTS
Kontakt 3

Now in its third incarnation, KONTAKT 3 builds on its reputation as the industry standard for professional sampling. The outstanding audio engine and state-of-the-art modular architecture provide unparalleled sonic potential for your music. Universal file import ensures global compatibility.

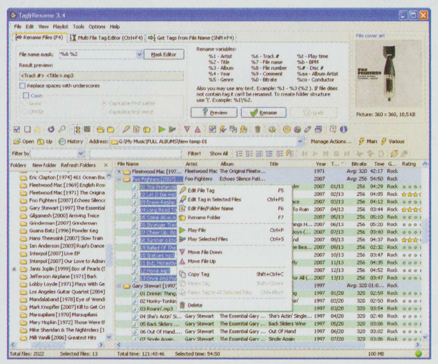
A huge sound collection connects you to a multitude of instruments, and the reworked interface makes playing and tweaking them effortless. KONTAKT 3 is the premier sampler for artists and producers from across the musical spectrum.

KONTAKT 3 contains an immense array of instruments. Six stunning Instrument Collections are included: Orchestral, World, Vintage, Band, Synth and Urban Beats – containing over 33 GB(!) of samples and 1000 instruments, all instantly accessible with the Quick-Search function. Every instrument in KONTAKT 3 now also features Performance Views that group together all the important parameters, connecting you to any sound immediately.

KONTAKT 3 delivers endless possibilities to edit, loop, slice or tempo-sync your samples with the Wave Editor. You can now even draw customised envelopes directly into the sample waveform to modulate any parameter. Enhance your sound by using the 18 high-quality effects, including new amp and cabinet emulations and a convolution effect.

Price: around £260 (Upgrade £70)

For more information please visit:
www.nativeinstruments.de



SOFTPOINTER
Tag & Rename 3.4.5

Tag & Rename from Soft Poniter is an extremely powerful and user-friendly music file tag editor that handles all popular digital audio formats. No matter what music compressor you prefer, you can keep your music collection organised with Tag & Rename since it is the only tag editor and organiser which has full native support for: MP3 (ID3v1, ID3v2.2, ID3v2.3 and ID3v2.4 tags), MusePack MPC/MP+ (APEv1, APEv2 and ID3v1 tags), Windows Media WMA, ASF and WMV files, Ogg Vorbis/Flac/Speex (vorbis comments), Apple iTunes and iPod AAC (M4A) files including MP4, lossless M4A and protected M4P files, most popular lossless codec's including Monkey's Audio, Flac, Wav Pack, Optim Frog, True Audio, Apple, Windows Media lossless and WAV.

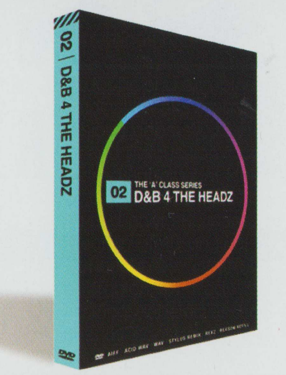
Tag & Rename supports many additional tag fields including lyrics, cover art, rating, mood, album, artist, classical music fields (Composer, Conductor, etc.), file related URL's and so on.

Features: manually edit music files tags; automatically fix and complete file tags using online database; load titles and cover art from amazon.com server. Load titles from tracktype.org server; get tags data from file names and its folders' structures; rename your music files and folders according to its music information in a batch; create play lists; export files information to CSV, HTML, XML and text formats and more.

Tag & Rename supports many files and tags standards in an easy and intuitive way, so you can work with music metadata and not have to think about files codecs and tags versions - Tag & Rename Really does do it all!

Price: around £15

For more information please visit:
www.softpointer.com



TIMESPACE
A-Class D&B 4 the Headz

D&B 4 THE HEADZ was created by one of the drum & bass scenes leading producers. This sample pack features an awesome collection of construction tracks, original, phat and heavy break loops, one shot drum samples, high energy percussion loops, old skool rave stabs, synths, strings, pads, musical chords and FX. It also contains a selection of original D&B bass samples, which have been processed using masterful distortion techniques. The library is 2.44 GB in size and is packed with the freshest sample material recorded in 24bit. Containing 780+ audio samples and 260+ REX2 loops, it is an essential tool for any serious producers of drum & bass, electronica or breakbeat music.

Features: 10 Constructions Kits - 10 professionally produced tracks displaying different styles. With 195 individual loops and samples. Beats: 104 of the most original breaks loops, all phat and heavy. Percussion Loops: 40 high energy rides, hi-hat, drum and percussion loops. One Shot Kit: 86 processed super phat kicks, snares, hats + percussion. Bass - 200 reece, distorted kicks, rave, analog and phat sub bass. Hardcore Stabs: A fresh collection of 40 original rave and hardcore stabs. Atmospheres: 12 atmospheric pads and bedding ambiences. Pads & Strings: 50 cool pads and strings labeled and grouped in chords. Liquid Keys: 51 cool keys for the liquid D+B vibe, labeled in chords.

This DVD is certainly an absolute bargain for the price you get a massive collection of ideal samples for your next D&B masterpiece!

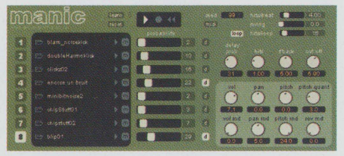
Price: around £20

For more information please visit:
www.timespace.com

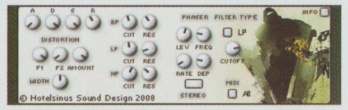
FREE STUFF!
The best free plug-ins!

Lithium Blaster
Performs a ray-gun noise, 1 oscillator, ADSR amp envelope, LFO speed, delay effect, 16 presets. www.freewebs.com/lithiumsound

GTG Drums
10 slot drum sample player with built-in effects. Get your free copy from www.gtgsynths.com



Manic
8 slot random sample player. You load your samples and Manic decides when to play them, useful when you have writers block or to create real havoc! www.delamancha.com



Hotelsinus Reese Bass
Simple plug-in with the sole purpose of re-creating the infamous 'Reese' bassline!
http://vst.hotelsinus.com

IMAGE-LINE
Deckadance

Deckadance is a new DJ mixing application that works either as a standalone program or as a VSTi plug-in inside your favourite host. Controlling Deckadance (Club Edition) comes in the form of using most (if not all) existing midi controllers & timecoded vinyl and CD systems.

Image-Line is the company behind audio software FL Studio, and they boast over 10 years' experience, so they sure know what they're doing! Deckadance adds to the growing amount of virtual DJ software in the market today and the good thing is that it seems with each new product or update, the software becomes more user-friendly to us 'hard-to-please' DJ's!

The VST plug-in compatible feature is very interesting, giving you more scope to experiment with your music productions is always a good thing. Other features include MP3, WAV and OGG formats; tempo analysis for perfect synchronisation; 12 outputs (6 stereo), master, monitor, deck A, deck B; loop, 6 inputs; reverse and leap feature; cross-fader curve adjustment; effects; 8 slot sampler; native remote DJ controller support; plus much more!

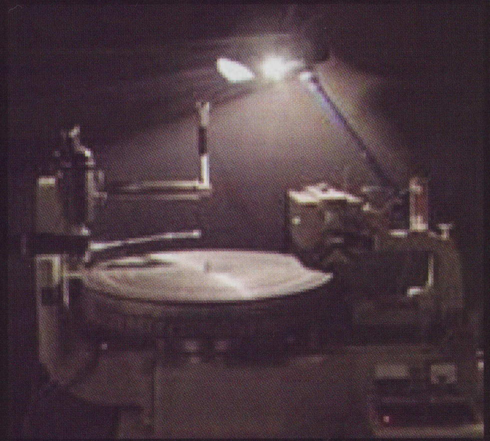
Price: around £90

For more information please visit:
www.deckadance.com

Massive Masters

The South Coasts Premier Mastering Company

The Home of Bespoke stereophonic CD & Vinyl Mastering



At Massive Masters we treat every job with the care & attention it deserves.

Your tracks can be uploaded to our FTP site for fast turnaround & you can now pay via paypal.

www.massivemasters.co.uk

www.myspace.com/massivemasters

Tel: +44 (0)1273 773394

Massive Masters are proud to announce that we are now working closely with new clients LOAD MEDIA

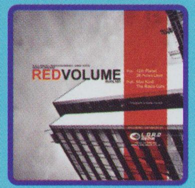
LOAD NEWS!

Dubstep

Forthcoming Dubstep In March / April 08

Veri lo recordings come to load with their first release by the mighty Rusco – 'Betamax' backed up by The Others – Bedbugs, this release is receiving big play by all DJs and is smashing the dance floor. Released March 2008.

Smog records join the load camp also and for the first release DJ Evol- 'Sickness'/ 12th Planet ? 'Smokescreen' both these tracks are absolute killers be warned. Miss this miss out. Released 10th march 2008.



Red Volume Records is also welcome to the load roster and boy this is set to do damage..
This label has records in everyone's bag/ box and they join load media for their 5th release.
With 12th Planet with '28 Hours Later' and Mac Koall with 'The Rasta Core' this release will be massive!!!

Henry 006 – 3.5 Recordings – Wedge – No Surrender / Inner Mind / Eastern Eye.
Mode 006 – Mode Recordings – Antiserum – Dungeon Waltz / Skull Fucked
10bag003 – 10 bag – Vista – Fiyah / Suspicious Stench – Putrid Creature.

> New label about to join load media.
Watch out in the next few months for Heavy Pressure recordings run by Moldy with big tracks such as 'Cod & Chips' , and 'Badman'. This label is set for big tings this year.

Drum 'n' Bass

NEWS

Big things for load media this year for Timeless Recordings as Serum joins the label for his debut release, after a string of hits on Dread for Ray Keith., he drops the killer tracks 'War Cry' and 'I'm For Real', that are being played by Bailey, Ray Keith, and all the usual suspects. Also on the agenda for timeless is a release form the man himself Digital as he joins forces for the track 'Distance' with Outrage & Aperture.

Nu directions drop their 41st release in the form of an ep from Spectra Soul. This is an ep of epic proportions and is set to do damage, with their unique deeper sounding tracks they are the men of the moment. With a string of big releases all ready under their belt on various labels they are taking the scene by storm. The 42nd release will be by Human Factor with 2 tracks from them 'All You Wanted' and 'Deep Love' so watch out for those 2 monsters from the nu directions camp.

March will see the full release of Bastard Child 002 which is Dylan & SPL with Dark Soul, back with Limewax & The Panacea with a track called Pigeons and Marshmallows. And this will be available on limited edition picture disks and on normal black vinyl.

forthcoming

New From The Freak Recordings camp for March/ April.

The 27th release on this imprint will see the Muffler 12 with his dance floor smashers 'Defeat The Evil' and 'Demons' promos for this sold out fast and is due for full release in March 2008. The next 12 will be an ep from Limewax with some absolute monsters the tracks include 'Icicle' 'Never Happening' which features Dylan's production also, 'Bomb' , and finally Give Up' this ep is a must for all freak fans and Limewax fans alike.
The 18th release on sister label 'Obscene' sees the debut release by Future Signal with 2 wicked dance floor destroyers in the form of 'Grime House' and 'Death mask'. These two track are set to smash up dances all over the world.
The release of the Audio LP through this camp gets ever closer and when this drops oh my what a treat for all.....

The next installment on LB recordings, Limewaxs imprint come with the second plate of pure evil as he unleashes a collab with the mighty Current Value to bring 'Tempest' and then his own offering 'Bathwater'. This label is set to do big things as Limewax has become a house hold name in the industry after a massive string of big 12s and even his own album and all at such a young age.

36th Chamber Music Group Presents 36 hertz.

Following on from the run away success of the debut label 36th Chambers Recordings, DJ Vapour and the Shaolin Drunken Monk bring the 2nd stage of the empire. And 36hrtz 001 – DJ Vapour – Sting in the Tail / Hade's – The Break Dj Vapour has risen the dnb ranks with break neck speed throughout last year with strong releases on 31 recs, Rufige, Dread, Basement, SGN: LTD, Inneractive, CIA, MAC II, and Deepkut. Sting in the Tail is in his own eyes the best track he has completed to date and by judgingby the dj support it's been getting he is not wrong. Support from Andy C, Randall, Fabio, Probe, Bailey, Ray Keith, Distorted Minds, and Shy Fx.

36 HERTZ RECORDINGS

Load media is proud to announce that it is now the UK partner for jungle expeditions from Canada with their massive collections of jungle stylee remixes and original ragga style tracks that have never been on full release before in the UK, watch this space for information on new products throughout the year.

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L.O.A.D MEDIA

BRYAN G

01. Utah Jazz - Runaway (Nu: Tone Remix) – Liquid V
02. Zero T - Long Distance - V Dub
03. Roni Size – Don't Hold Back Remixes - Dub
04. Die - Coming From The Top - Dub
05. Roni Size - Out The Game Remix - Dub
06. Dillinja – Sky (Zero T Remix) - V Dub
07. Fresh - All That Jazz VIP - V Dub
08. Dillinja - Grimey (Clipz Remix) - Dub
09. Mosus and Zero T - Runtime - Liquid V Dub
10. Cabbie and Probe - Mr Jah – chronic

ANDY MYSTIC

01. SpectraSoul - The Waterfront EP - Nu Directions
02. Random Movement & The Insiders - Movin' Along - Dub
03. Lomax - Come And See - Dub
04. Mixmaster Doc & Focus - Bon Mot - Dub
05. Survival - The Source - Nu Directions
06. Marky & Makoto - Stressed Out - Dub
07. SpectraSoul - Tender Doubt - Celcius
08. Human Factor - Deep Love - Nu Directions
09. Brother – Junction - Influence
10. Random Movement - Undisclosed Amount - Nu Directions

PINCH

01. Peverelist - Infinity Is Now - Tectonic
02. 2562 - Redux - Dub
03. Distance - Victim Support - Dubplate
04. Joker – 80s - Kapsize Recordings
05. Pinch – E-Motive - Dub
06. Gieom - Reminissin' - Dub
07. Mala - Miracles - Dub
08. Kromestar – Attention - Dub
09. Pinch - 136 Trek - Punch Drunk
10. Glory – Moldy feat. Juakali – Earwax

ESCAPE

01. Hazard - Cowards Beware - Playaz
02. Escape - Fear of The Future (Connecta rmx) - Muzik Hertz
03. Aesthetics - Keep Watch - Muzik Hertz
04. Cabbie – JahJah - Dub
05. Pa & Mutated Forms – Hitback - Muzik Hertz
06. Serial Killaz - Worries In The Dance (2008 Remix) - Dub
07. Hazard - Killers Don't Die - Playaz
08. Shy FX - Ra (G-Dub Remix) - Ebony Dubs
09. Drumsound & Bassline Smith - Everybody Pump - Technique
10. NW2 - Tiger Tail - Muzik Hertz

MARK OD

01. Zero Tolerance - Original R – CIA
02. Roni Size & Die – Music Box (Sigma Remix) – Dub
03. Lomax – Artisan VIP – Dub
04. Sonic & Makoto – Thriller – Dub
05. Instra:mental - Sakura – Darkestral
06. Dillinja – Sky (Zero T Remix) – V
07. The Insiders – Burnt – Dub
08. Sabre & Current Value – Endless - Critical
09. Saburuko – Find A Lover – Integral
10. Dawn Raid – First Blood - Dub

FRICTION
SHOGUN AUDIO

Loxy & Ink - Amazon - Shogun Audio
I've been waiting to pounce on these guys for a release for ages. Two of the original soldiers, these guys were smashing Hardware at The End when I was begging for a warm up! 'Amazon' probably is the most apt title possible as this tune literally takes you into the jungle. Pounding bass line, definitely one for the headz.

Hazard - Machete - Ganja
One of the most raw, in your face, fuck off, dancefloor tunes for time. You've all heard it. Absolutely rowdy as you like. Another Ganja smasher from Hazard.

Icicle - Spartan - Shogun Audio
Icicle's progressing his sound quicker than Lewis Hamilton. This track is more of a pounding stomper with lashings of bass. I think people thought the ribs were gonna cave in when I played this at Shogun.

TC - Driver - D Style
Another big dancefloor tune from TC. Big sample, big drums and bass. This has been getting the rewind most sets. One of my favourite TC tunes for a minute.

Shy FX - Plastic Soul (D Bridge Remix) - Dub
Sometimes when I hear a tune, I really screw up my face, probably to the point where I look like I hate it, when in fact I actually love it. This is one of those tunes! D goes in and twists this up into some angry soul. Definitely not plastic!

Spectrasoul - The Tube - Shogun Audio
I've been grooming Spectrasoul for stardom over the last 12 months and these two guys have been coming with some amazing music with a style of their own. 'The Tube' is proper bass-line roller and for me is their finest moment yet. Remember the name as your gonna be buying / downloading a lot from them!

Proxima - Critical Force - SGN Ltd
Another Dutch whiz kid pops out from nowhere! Proxima is an artist who's got some hot tunes under his belt and I think is gonna get some attention soon. This stays pretty minimal but rolls and rolls. Keep your eyes on this one.

Commix - Talk To Frank (Break rmx) - Metalheadz
Another track most of you probably know about and another great piece of production from Mr Break. 'Talk To Frank' was one of my favourite tracks from last year and really has helped to bring back the emphasis on the bass again. Break keeps it on roughly the same kinda tip but polishes everything up with his own trademark style. Another system smasher.

Blame – Batcave - Charge
Blame seems to pull a killer out the bag on a regular basis and I've been introing with this track on and off for about 6 months! Steel drums a plenty on this with a real old skool feel to it. Sounds amazing on a good sound system and very, very good for mixing!

Zinc – Untitled - Bingo
I'm not actually sure the name on this one but I've been playing it since the turn of the year. It's one of a few things from Sinc doing the rounds at the moment, forthcoming on Bingo. A thumping, anthemic vocal track that's been going down really well, you'll definitely know it when you hear it!

N-TYPE
RINSE FM

Benga - Feel No Better - Dub
This tune is pure fire! Innovative and progressive. If it ain't the sample that instantly gets you, the driving techno-dub bassline or infectious beats certainly will! The tune develops with precision; every sound that's introduced makes the tune more infectious! Benga's sound is nothing but pure quality, bringing the best influences from techno, house, dub an many other underground genres all into one place. This has all the ingredients! Sick!

Coki - Robotnik - Dub
Coki B-lines are infamous in the dubstep movement! This man has influenced so many producers with his innovative take on bassline automation and swinging dub beats. Coki is not only the master of B-line as he has produced many reggae / dubbed out hits over the last few years. This time round, Coki gives us a sick bassline tear out but with slower skanking beats. This is a blatant wheel and deal! G'wan Coki!

Benga & Walsh - Bass Face - Dub
"Go and get your bass face!" Don't be shy! Get your bottom lip out and screw up dat facial! We have all got potential for a B-line jawside! This is a banger! The bassline is reminiscent of the Renegade Hardware sound with a raw distorted bass seeping through. Watch out for the sinister robot summoning your bass faces, I'm sure you won't disappoint him! Lol.

Rusko ft. Lutan Fyah - Soundguy Is My Target - Dub
Rusko heading back to his reggae / dub roots on this one! Big sing-a-long riddem! Smashes every dancehall! This is an original vocal from Lutan Fyah written for this big boy riddem! Wheel up time!

Stenchman - Signs V.I.P - Dub
Stenchman made a serious impact with the original 'Signs' riddem last year. Every time I played it in a dance the crowd went off their head! After the last few weeks laboratory tests, I can conclude this dirty, stankin remix does the same! (I knew that anyway...but gotta set the scene though.) Big riddem!

Seven – Siren - Dub
Seven has recently built a whole arsenal of sick tracks which have been murdering the dancefloors under the hands of none other then Youngsta. This tune is subbed out and stomping, with a hip hop style skank and a wonky donkey siren sound. Big boy tune and a lot more bangers coming from Seven real soon! Keep an ear and an eye out!

Benny Page – Swagger - Digital Soundboy
This tune goes off in a dancehall! Benny Page has smashed it! The film like soundtrack kicks of the riddem, setting the scene for the bassline fury to follow! Benny page has a back catalogue of sick d'n'b tunes, now he looks to do the same with dubstep! Go on Benny my son!

Chefal aka DJ Chef - Electro Bashment - Dub
Fresh roller from Rinse FM don Chefal. This has bashment style beats with electro blips and stutters, not forgetting a sick rolling bassline. Chefal is well know as one of Rinse FM's biggest selectors and joke-a-delic hosts! In the last year he has taken to the studio and has quickly established his own original sound. 2008 looks promising for DJ/Producer Chefal.

all star reviews

ZERO TOLERANCE
V / CIA / INTEGRAL

Ian Brown - Illegal Attack's (Goldie Remix) - Dub
Been a while since the 'mainstream' music industry has stepped to D&B for a big remix. Lush strings, orchestration and a stepping break introduce this track to the square wave bassline and Brown's "So what the f**k is this UK?" It's deep, heavy and making a statement on current affairs! More than your usual D&B roller... 4 your mind!

Dillinja – Sky (Zero T Remix) - V
I was more than honoured to remix this '94 classic by the don of all things jungle - Dillinja! 'Sky' is one of my favourite jungle tracks of the 90s, supreme break programming and sick bass, coupled with hip hop vocal snippets and a simple hook! All I have done is try to apply my techniques to the same principles and hope I have done the original some justice! Should be appearing on a Dillinja Remix 12 on V very soon!

Roni Size / Reprazent - New Forms 2 - Dub
When I heard about this idea, I couldn't believe my ears! Brings me back to my youth! Its the 90s all over again... Roni has updated the entire LP for '08 and what a job he has done, staying true to the original LP in every way, he has done just enough to make it new, but not so much that it loses its unique charm. After more than a year off the DJ circuit, Roni is BACK to rinse us all! Watch out!

Zero T feat. Steo - The Original R - CIA LP Sampler
A current favourite of Hype and Randall to name a few, the flip of 'Walk Away', this will be the Sampler 12 off my CIA LP , due in May '08. As the title suggests, it's a tribute to Reinforced Records, the birth place of it ALL. For all the true enforcers past present and future!

Calibre - Leave Me - Signature
One of the dancefloor slayers off his new LP forthcoming on Signature, of course! Will surprise a lot off people I think, not a step he uses often, generally this track has a quirky vibe to it that will stick in your head for days! Catchy, funky as hell, a certain crowd pleaser. Also watch out for killers 'TV On', 'Suddenly' and 'Soc It To Me'. Too much !

Nu:Logic – Trademark - Dub
The brothers Gresham combine in a Super Group styleee and the result is this 'every set' roller that's deeper than Bono's pockets. The Headhunters (Bacteria) break sounds more lashing than ever, filtering synths drawing in and out and chunky subs get everyone's head down low and skanking! F**k off Cambrigians!

Digital - Too Late - Function Dub
Mr. Carr sent this to me last week, from the forthcoming EP on Function...and OH MY! Digital is coming for you, lethal , chop your head off Helicopter break, coupled with searing Reese layers and a ugly sub B-line that pounds your chest! 2008 = Jungle.

System - Near Miss - Dub
A name you may not know, not for long. Mark System has been as MC on the circuit for many moons and has been in the lab cooking up sickening beats on the QT! I think Alix featured this on his ATM cover CD and can now be heard in the sets of Goldie, Randall, Shy FX, Bailey, Friction etc.... big, bashy, dark , funky, good music for the dancefloor! Gully is the term, so I'm told.

SUB FOCUS
RAM RECORDS

Sub Focus – Timewarp - Ram
This is my new single forthcoming on Ram in March, the first to be taken from my debut album landing later this year. Alternates between triplet and normal time signatures with a 4 to the floor beat. If you haven't heard it yet you should get out more!

Shy FX - Bambatta (Break Remix) - Dub
Absolutely tearing new remix of the classic Shy FX tune by Break. Adding glitchy edits and techy bass, which morphs and switches in a wicked way as the track progresses. Really classy update.

Pendulum - Propane Nightmares Remix - Dub
Excellent dancefloor remix by Pendulum of their new single 'Propane', this combines the rocky hooks of the original with some really sick bass. Expect to hear this in a club near you soon.

Sub Focus - Join The Dots - Ram
Another new tune from myself, borrowing some techno/electro ideas to add to the mix. Alternating long and short major chord stabs form the bassline with some mad delays and build ups to add hype, seems to be getting a really good reaction on the 'floor.

Fresh – Clap - Dub
Great new tune from Fresh, with an old Bad Company-esque feel. Lots of classic grinding Reece and bleeps with a shouted 'Clap' refrain. Also watch out for his killer VIP mix of 'Exhale'.

Culture Shock and Brookes Bros – Smoothie - Dub
Two of my favourite new producers' team up again after their massive first collabo' 'Rework'. This one has an excellent fluid bassline with subtle tweaks along the way. Been playing this every set for months.

Baron - Turn Up The Sun - BBK
Brand new tune from Baron with a really catchy gliding synth lead. This one's got a really different sound to it. Coming out on BBK later in the year.

Nymfo & Proxima - Headless Housefly – Frequency
Wicked Ram circa '96 vibes on this piece, complete with rolling breaks and Cause 'n Effect style warping bass. Forthcoming on Frequency in the near future.

Hazard – Machete – Playaz
This tune is brutal! Ominous intro with b-movie film speech and descending guitar stabs. Goes into a smashing drop with some of the nastiest bass I've ever heard.

Roni Size & Die - Music Box (Sigma Remix) – Dub
This is a really tasteful remix of the old classic, taking all the sounds and patterns from the original but updating the mixdown for 2008. If you liked the original you're gonna love this.

LOMAX

01. Lomax - Burning Flag EP - Critical
02. Zero T & Survival - No More - Dispatch
03. Spectrasoul - Reasons Why - Critical
04. Lomax – Unite – Dub
05. Morebeat Vs Kantyze – Alchemy - Industry
06. Xample & Lomax – Contra - Dub
07. Kubiks - Blood Ties - Spearhead
08. Chris SU & TC1 - The Vendetta - Commercial Suicide
09. Strider - Try To Repair - Dub
10. EBK – Retina - DSCi4

CYRUS

01. Mala - Drunken Swagger - Dub
02. Random Trio – Delight - Dub
03. Cluekid - Toad Step - Dub
04. Quest – Stand - Dub
05 - Kromestar – Attention - Dub
06. Distance – V - Chestplate
07. Random Trio – Whispers - RTP
08. Silkie - I Said - Deep Medi
09. The Others - Africa VIP - Dub
10. Cyrus Vs Distance – Violate - Dub

SILENT WITNESS

01. Silent Witness & Break – Module – DNAudio
02. Commix – Talk To Frank – (Break Remix) - Metalheadz
03. Silent Witness & Survival – Sideline - DNAudio
04. Break - Destiny Rings – Commercial Suicide
05. Mindscape & Safire – Heatstroke - Resolute
06. Break & Survival – Dawn - DNAudio
07. Silent Witness & Break – Visions - DNAudio
08. D-Bridge – Freedom Club - Exit
09. Silent Witness - Contempt - DNAudio
10. Vicious Circle & Sabre – Endless – Critical

XAMPLE

01. Xample & Lomax – Contra - Dub
02. Zen – Hovercraft - Dub
03. Xample & Jakes - Art of War - Dub
04. TC – Driver - Dub
05. Original Sin - Cheater Cheater - Dub
06. Xample & Jakes – Grindin - Dub
07. Distorted Minds - Ghost Town - Dub
08. Subfocus – Timewarp - Ram
09. Icicle & Nymfo - Franky Mountain - Dub
10. Xample feat. Dread MC - The Automatic - Dub

BAILEY

01. Influx UK – Show Em What You Got - Grid
02. Rufige Kru – Mirror – Metalheadz
03. Niskala – Dissent (Dan Miracle Remix) - Intasound
04. Shy FX – Plastic Soul (D-Bridge rmx 2) - Digital Soundboy
05. Lomax & Heist – She's Cold - Dub
06. Dillinja - Sky (Zero T Remix) - V Recordings
07. Visionary feat. D Suade & RNR - Change is Gonna Come - Digital Soundboy
08. Chase & Status – Disco VIP - Ram
09. Marcus Intalex – Konspiracy - Soul:R
10. A Guy Called Gerald – The Approach - Dub

drum & bass reviews

Reviewed by: Lucas Buck, Jon Ethics, Rockwell, Mark OD, Vantage and Jeryl Wilton.

ATM DOWNLOADS
Download tagged tunes from: www.atm-mag.com/downloads

Jonny L
Oh Yeah / Come Here
Mr L

The first release of 2008 by ATM cover star Jonny L, sees him drop the rave-tastic 'Oh Yeah' backed with the lo-fi acid of 'Come Here'. The A-side is euphoric hardcore-inspired drum and bass that is the 2008 take on one of his biggest hits 'Hurt You So'. The vocal divides opinion on this one, but for our money gives the track the raw emotion that lifts it to great heights and given the right backing we reckon this could do some damage in the charts. 'Come Here' couldn't be more different, composed on his Roland 303, this is a simple but addictive number that's been getting caned by the likes of Marcus Intalex and co. D&B like no other.

Various Artists
New Blood EP
Med School

Such is the success of the Hospital Records' camp that setting up sister label, Med School would appear perfect sense. Add a mass of demos that find their way into the Hospital HQ on a daily basis and hey presto there's a label to nurture the new talent. This, the 7th label release, is arguably the most important to date. The big hype has surrounded Martsman with his 'Worst Case Scenario' track, an impressive demonstration of heavyweight bass and cut-throat drum programming. On the flip 'Psalm 24' by Infiltrata is a relentless barrage of beats and bass, after building suspense with a 70s film score style intro. Our personal favourite goes to newcomer Minotaur whose 'World Beyond' is a heavy-hitting sci-fi beast.

Spectrasoul
Waterfront EP
Nu Directions

Brighton-based duo, Spectrasoul, follow up the excellent 'Blood Rain' on Westbay with four more groove trenched sub bass explorations for Nu Directions. Every track here is pure quality, each embellishing a rigid backbone of bass and beats with an intoxicating sense of soul. From the warm stepping funk of 'Adoration' and 'Falling Down' to the lilting piano chords of 'Seeing Stars' and oscillating progression of 'Unearthed' every single track on this EP is pure quality. As part of Friction's Shogun family and with beats of this quality pouring forth, Spectrasoul are rightly set for a massive year.

Alix Perez & Lynx
Allegiance EP
Soul:R

Two of drum and bass's greatest hopes come together on the consistently excellent and forward-thinking Soul:R and as you'd expect the quality oozes out of your speakers. All four tracks feature Perez & Lynx either in solo or collaboration form and there's not a duff note to be found across two slabs of vinyl. Title track, 'Allegiance' and 'Inferno' see the duo exploring deep space and bass manipulation that kind of reminds me of Krust circa Soul In Motion but with a sparser sound and bang up-to-date beats. Elsewhere Lynx goes funk mode with the definite grower, 'Randy', a track that excels with heavy funk horn stabs and cinematic strings, while Perez confirms his love of all things hip-hop with the sublime 'Crooklyn'. Pure class.

Brother
Junction / Make A Life
Influence Records

Influence is a brand new label from Swerve resident Aaron Jay. As a statement of intent for the future he's chosen hot new talent Brother to get the label off to a very fine start with two tracks of undeniable quality. 'Junction' is a cracking little track that uses a warm and deep hook that keeps the track rolling effortlessly on. It's already been a big hit in the hands of the deeper, more soulful DJs in the scene and you can definitely hear why. On the flip 'Make A Life' employs filtered strings, instrumentation and a delicate vocal with a pulsating bass to keep the vibes deep and intoxicating. A very respectable debut for Influence.

Klute
Love As Divinity / Hang With Me
Samurai Music

The totally unique and ever refreshing Klute steps up for New Zealand label Samurai Music with two typically distinctive deep futuristic rollers. Klute's sound is entirely his own, always striking the right the balance of vibes and energy within constantly progressing track structures. 'Love As Divinity' is a joyous, synth-heavy track with the very purest of subs and a curiously upper-class lady's voice sampled to brilliant effect. 'Hang With Me' is entirely different but equally strong, spreading a multitude of retro sci-fi synthesiser workouts over classic breaks and long, drawn-out bass pads. As is to be expected really, some masterful D&B craftsmanship once again from Klute.

Twisted Individual
Tear The Roof Off Remix
DJ Vapour
Table Top Remix
East Side

More tales from the East Side of the tracks here and we find Twisted Individual tearing the roof off again. Rolling beats and bird call atmospherics give way to a cool wobble bass drop, similar in style to Nu:Tone's 'Missing Link' or Die & Clipz's 'Black Doves'. Don't dismiss this rude roller- it'll be sweet in the mix for many different sides of the scene. 'Table Top' remix follows in the same vein as new skool apprentice DJ Vapour's other output: tough, crunchy stepping beats and submarine squashed bass. This track in particular could do with a bit more variation, but the background FX keeps your ears interested through the minimalism.

Furney
Bedouin Soul / Mancini
Soundtrax

The increasingly popular Furney follows up his material on Good Looking and Advanced with this release on Soundtrax. 'Bedouin Soul' kicks off with mountain top textures and rainforest atmospherics. Tribal percussion then ensues before dropping a snaking B-line (reminiscent of old Matrix & Fierce or even X-Plorer) over running beats. This one is an undeniable grower that many should appreciate. Flip over for ethereal FX adorning the deep and tranquil 'Mancini', including some great female vocals. The drums are slightly spitty with a thinned out amen, but that is a minor complaint on a B-side that reinforces this excellent 12 and makes it a release you need to check.

Optical
Electric Music / Kung Fu
Virus

After ten years in business this latest 12 is only Virus's twentieth release and the label's first ever solo Optical affair. With releases so rare and the label's legacy so renowned, expectations are always high. The two tracks here are very different to each other, yet both still unmistakably Optical. 'Kung Fu' is Optical in his modern guise; all tranced out synths and sampled Foo Fighters guitars; sure to appeal to some but guaranteed to leave fans of his older work horrified. To those, 'Electric Music' will offer solace, fusing a classic Optical bassline with the trancier traits of his more recent productions. Not the groundbreaking beats of the past from Optical but still quality, interesting D&B.

Icicle
Lost Hours / Late nights
Critical

If ATM did a 'record of the issue' then this 12 would be well in with a shout. Critical swiftly follows up its landmark thirtieth release with two divine pieces of drum & bass from Dutchman Icicle. Obviously paying his respects to the late nineties tech-step vibes of Optical, Jonny L and the like, Icicle expertly tempers an overwhelmingly heavy and moody vibe with a sense of groove and depth that 120 words here cannot possibly do justice to. 'Lost Hours' is the warmer of the two with its busy layered breaks and collapsing bass, while 'Late Nights' is a real '98 style tech-step monster that pounds you with its quality. Essential.

Aspect & Gremlinz
Upset (Crack Wife)
Data
Curfew
Sound Artillery

New drum & bass labels are launched nearly every week these days and far too often subsequently fade into obscurity after just a couple of releases. Thankfully for Sound Artillery these two tracks represent their third release and are nothing short of pure quality. Aspect & Gremlinz come forth with 'Upset', layering classic break over classic break before a twisted late-90s synth riff signals the drop into some subbed out tribal funkery. On the flip Data's 'Curfew' brings a complete contrast. Minimal, techy and as deep as the Pacific, this is a track for anyone who loves their D&B to move not just their feet, but their spirit too.

Naibu
It Took a Long Time / Urban Sprawl
Creative Source

Creative Source releases are always a little bit special. With the last release from Fabio's label being Lynx's massive 'Disco Dodo', the pressure is really on new French producer Naibu to do the damage. Thankfully it's a task he handles with ease with these two truly inspiring pieces of drum & bass. 'It Took A Long Time' brings a naturally loose drum groove and bassline to vivid life with its all-enveloping musical soundscapes, littered with various vocals and obscure samples. It's the flip though 'Urban Sprawl' that really grabs your attention with its half time rhythm and laughing samples mercilessly ripped to pieces by a screw-faced twisted bass lick.

Instra:mental
Sakura / Rogue
Darkestral

If you Google the title-track 'Sakura', you'll be referred to a site that tells you all about the Japanese Cherry blossom trees that the name refers to. You learn something new everyday with the internet! Anyway, down to business, 'Sakura' (and the more militant 'Rogue') picks up where the outstanding 'Pacific Heights' left off on Darkestral's last release and reaffirms our belief that drum and bass has the quality to work beyond the dancefloor, in other arenas including film, and as a soundtrack comparable in quality with any other genre. The unmistakable Instra:mental drums combined with lush and complex electronic soundscapes are sure to win fans beyond the D&B industry and here at ATM we're fully signed up members to Darkestral's fan club. Superb, simply superb.

Breakage
Cooper / Rebel Creations
Critical

The magnificent Critical marks its thirtieth release with two tracks from one of D&B's most respected producers, Breakage. Taking an organic, dubwise approach to drum & bass has won Breakage fans beyond the walls of the genre; something that is sure to continue as long as he unleashes beats like these. 'Cooper' is a rolling, blissful mood of track, soaked in dub elements, morphing progressively from one dominant sound to another over a loose and natural groove. 'Rebel Creations' meanwhile is an angry, oppressive half-step rhythm that smothers you with its dogged, inexorable bass and heavily stoned atmospherics and achieves something genuinely different within the generic confines of drum & bass.

Friction & Nu Balance
Robocop (Taxman rmx) / Slipstream (Logistics rmx)
Playaz

Absolutely f*cking massive! That's pretty much all you need to know about this release really. I'm considering using the remaining 80 or so words to talk about something else, but alas that would be an abuse of my position, so I'll give you more detail. Taxman's remix of 'Robocop' drops like a skydiver without a parachute, fast and deadly, bringing his trademark sound to this classic track. On the back side Hospital golden boy Logistics steps up with some trademark rolling breaks and a subdued LFO bassline that'll warm your winter cockles a treat. Something for everyone on this 12 and if you haven't rushed to buy it already then we suggest you put your shoes on quickly.

Vapour / Bladerunner
Dark Soldier Remixes
Dread

Ray Keith's seminal 'Dark Soldier', easily one of the most recognisable D&B classics of all time, resurfaces once again. This time things are handled in strictly 2008 fashion with impeccably produced remixes coming courtesy of Dread protégé Bladerunner and the 'so hot right now' DJ Vapour. Both take all the necessary stabs, samples, bass and breaks that made the original and bring them bang up to date. Bladerunner's mix is a solid re-working in typical Dread style that effortlessly offsets the dark and rugged with silky smooth. It's Vapour's version though that brings the real freshness, with its sweeping FX and distorted nasty bass colluding with perfectly processed breaks to add new depth to this classic track.

Mosus
1999 / Postmodern
Samurai

It seems Mosus' time is well and truly about to come. With tracks lined up for some of the deeper side of the scene's biggest labels, these two tracks on fellow New Zealand label Samurai Music show why. Fans of the techno influenced sound artists like Marcus Intalex or Jonny L are dropping right now will love both these tracks. '1999' brings some retro-futurism with its claps, bleeps and scattered percussion building to a drop that unleashes a bassline that leaves plenty of room to groove. Originality is the word here, and 'Post Modern' screams it. Rhythmic, futuristic, hypnotic it's everything the words drum & bass should stand for, shocking you out with vibes instead of straightforward aggression.

Phobia
What has become (ft. Spirit) / Hatcher / Singularity / Just A Nod (VC rmx)
Renegade Hardware

This four-tracker pulls no punches, but unfortunately holds few surprises either. The collaboration with Spirit; although a monster of a tune with tearing Reeces and chest-punching subs is standard issue for Hardware aficionados and sounds extremely similar to several tunes forged by Spirit himself. 'Hatcher' harks back to the millennial rollers of Bad Company and C4C, whilst 'Singularity' adopts a new-school neuro-approach, sounding like a rawer take on the recent remix of Break's 'The Quest'. Vicious Circle finish things off with their take on 'Just A Nod', which falls far short of their best work. All in all an EP still worth checking for both the Spirit collaboration and 'Hatcher'.

Zyon Base
Tombstone Blues / City of the Red Night
DSM

The DSM boys follow up a cracking release by Lynx with these two gems by Belfast-based Shogun contributor Zyon Base. 'Tombstone Blues' is an atmospheric roller with lush vocals, warping basslines and warm vibes that will send a shiver up your spine. Partner the sweet vibes with snappy breaks and deep sub bass and you have a track that will suit both the floor and the iPod. Top stuff. 'City Of The Red Night' follows on from the A-side but on a tougher vibe aimed squarely at the floor. Tough, warping bass coupled with Commix-esque modulated bass effectively wrapped with beautiful pads ensure this tune is tough enough but still retains a deep vibe. DSM on a roll!

Suv
Don't Know Why feat. Spoonface / Output (Rmx) feat. Natural MC
Playside

The man like Suv comes correct with some Bristol flavoured cuts here. The first track draws on the vocal talents of Spoonface, who rolls out a smooth refrain over a clattering break and breezy pads. When the monotone B-line drops it's cool for a while but ultimately doesn't hold the interest and the mind drifts off wondering whether Spoonface's face really does look like a spoon. The remix of 'Output' hots things up a bit though, with some of our favourite west-country bass warbles to step to. Suv was genuinely one of drum & bass's most interesting and original artists, but this release falls short of that reputation and leaves you expecting more.

Peshay feat. DJ SS & Influx UK
Make Some Noise / Bassline Rumble
Formation

Been a long time since we've seen Peshay's name on anything, so on paper this collaboration looked a bit tasty. However off paper and on speaker it fails to spark. 'Make Some Noise' is a feel-good party track but the female vocal over some big booming bass just doesn't cut it. I'm not asking for deep thought provoking lyrics, after all this is dancefloor D&B, but just something that sounds nice. Perhaps it's the mixdown but it all sounds rather muddy. Flip for 'Bassline Rumble' and we're treated to an awesome two minute intro of teasing bass rumbles, string pads and vox before it drops and we get ruffed up by some dirty beats and twisted riffs.

Break
Live Evil
Tactile, Spinline, Munk & Naibu
Antartica
Chronic

The mighty Break pops up on Levitated for a typically dirt ridden, teched out affair to keep his growing cohort of fans more than happy. A trademark tick-a-tick-a rhythm is the order of the day on 'Live Evil' before a cutting chainsaw riff bursts through to the fore and rolls out nicely with gentle filters to keep things bubbling in inimitable Break style. Not his best but still a solid set filler. 'Antartica' on the reverse sees Tactile, Spinline, Munk and Naibu come together to create an ice-cold roller with airy atmospherics and an other worldly vocal sample drifting over warm waves of bass and crisp percussion.

John B
Mr Freud / Red Sky
Beta

Always good to see what D&B's favourite eccentric is up to and here John returns with a more conventional approach than his previous glitch electro-rock offerings. 'Mr Freud' still clearly retains that electro vibe with a very familiar 'bodyrock' sample but aims it squarely at the D&B floor with a large 2step break and a gloriously spaced out breakdown. A light synth motif doubles up with a punchy stabbing riff before it drops and rocks our little socks off. 'Red Sky' sees Mr B back in epic trance mode, with a large female vocal drawing out over dreamy pads and piano licks on the intro before a phat pitch-bend bass line smacks in and away we go.

Shimon
Gunslinger / The Damned
Cymbalism

Originally destined for release on Ram a couple of years back but only making it as far as the promo stage (it went for silly money on eBay), 'Gunslinger' gets picked up by US camp Cymbalism for a full release at last. It's a simple, stepping, bass riff beast that never quite hits the spot but that will no doubt still move a less discerning floor. Shimon proves his mettle on the flip though with the excellent 'The Damned', a new track that will get faces wincing, with its nasty vocal sample coupling up with a screaming synth-bass, frenetic breaks and heavy subs. Worth a purchase, if not for the ageing A-side, then for the flip.

Random Movement
Believe No Other / The Student
Westbay International

Officially the best Westbay International release to date (yes, despite there only being three of them so far), with a wide selection of DJs getting their panties wet about the lead track and eager anticipation from fans of Random Movement's sound. It's certainly true that 'Believe…' is an absolutely stunning tune, utilising simple but effective use of vocals throughout over an effortless backbone of drums, bass and a touch of soul. 'The Student' on the flip is a more tearing, liquid affair with rolling breaks and a powerful bassline, it's 110% about the A-side though, it can not be outdone!

Krooked & Rob STP Feelings
Krooked & Camo Lost Out There
Dirty Habit

Mackie's Dirty Habit label is already developing a reputation for putting out a selection of the finest dancefloor beats. Its first two releases saw tracks from Dash & Samurai, Agent Alvin, Subsenix & Kiro and Krooked, and now Krooked comes correct with another pair of partners in bassline crime for the latest 12. 'Feelings' alongside Rob STP is all about the grinding basslines and stomping, unforgiving drums. Teaming up with Austrian Camo on 'Lost Out There', Krooked brings some quality jump up style elements, demonstrating a refinement in production values that most new producers simply cannot match.

Survival
Delta / Sleeper
Audio Tactics

What can be said about 'Delta' apart from….Oh my gosh. Absolute filth. This is one nasty, snarling roller from Mr Survival, bringing the first release to his own imprint, Audio Tactics, that malevolent tribal warmth he and his co-conspirators have made synonymous. On the flip 'Sleeper' is a more cinematic affair that transports you to harrowing, frightening terrains with its constantly progressing soundscape guiding you across an impossibly smooth sea of bass. While 'Sleeper' is probably best left to the heads to covet, the hypnotising roll of 'Delta' will have wide appeal beyond its niche. Expect great things from Audio Tactics.

Various Artists
From The Inside Out EP
Lifted Music

The Lifted crew are back with the third offering from their freshly formed imprint and this time everybody's getting involved. The UK-USA contingent of Spor, Evol Intent, Ewen and Apex are joined by the exceptionally talented Phace from Germany and provide between them four breathtaking, hard as a tombstone slabs of 21st century electronica. The Lifted sound isn't for the faint hearted as the twisted fury of Spor & Phace's 'Dying Of The Light' proves, yet the tracks here offer far more than just straightforward nasty aggression. Ewen & Spor bring some swinging machine funk on 'We Dominate' while the super funked 'Levitate' and main room dance floor filth of 'Dirge' add further variety to a very well developed sound.

Micky Finn & Erb N Dub
Attention / Stop
Finn People

Infamous throughout the music industry for his no nonsense approach to making people dance, Micky Finn's career has been long and illustrious. In keeping with tradition Finn People, the latest project for him to dip his wick into, has certainly been getting some bodies moving. This release sees Mr Finn himself team up once more with Erb N Dub for a pair of killer tracks that will have fans of bass-heavy drum & bass calling for the reload. 'Attention' grips up a Method Man vocal and lays it over a smacking jump up foundation while 'Stop' gets all DMX on yo' ass. Reminiscent of Urban Takeover's hip hop sampling, bass-bouncing heyday!

Modified Motion & Faction
The Darkness
Soundclash & Zero G
Sound Killa
XS Records

Opening with orchestral provenance and Modified Motion & Faction's usual brand of jump up nuttiness, 'The Darkness' is dancefloor killing material through and through. Pulling no punches in traditional XS Records style, it's easy to see why this label is standing out amongst the crowd at the moment. More orchestral influences with some mental choral business on the flip, as Soundclash & Zero G bring the pain on 'Sound Killa', a bass heavy monster that rounds off this 12 perfectly. If you like your drum & bass wobbly and noisy, this is the one for you no dizzle.

Cabbie
Blast Off / Bass Kick
NAM Musik

Nicol & Majistrate take a back seat for this release on NAM Musik as Cabbie drives them off on a bass fuelled taxi journey around hard and heavy beats territory. 'Blast Off' sounds like the bastard son of Sonic the Hedgehog and King Tubby, with insane computer game type beats mingling with some serious rib cage damaging bass. 'Bass Kick' keeps things on a similar tip for the ravers amongst us, with its tight production and big fat mixdown setting this release apart from the deluge of wobble that's out there right now. Rig mashing, mosh inducing mentalness.

DJ Pleasure
Killing Curse / New York City
Calypso Muzak

Part of the Co-Lab Recordings 'Straight Out The Lab' series, this latest release on sister label Calypso Muzak from DJ Pleasure is some no nonsense, dancefloor battering material. 'Killing Curse' rolls out with a tight break and some wobbling bass warps that will please any jump up lover, but it's 'New York City' on the flip side which has something interesting to say. Combining some choice brass samples with a typically punchy beat and multiple mid-range bubbles, this track holds your interest more than most. Choice floor fodder again from the Co-Lab crew!

Inside Info
Skyhook
Katharsys
The Scraper
Breed Twelve Inches

Inside Info drops his most talked about release to date on a new label from Lifted Music devoted to the potential Spors and Evol Intents of the future. 'Skyhook' is a brash combination of ultra compressed beats, strange 80s guitar licks (yeah, really) and an absolutely insane bassline that has to be heard to be believed.
Somehow though, it all works perfectly. Katharsys brings some dutty rock business on the flip with 'The Scraper', a track that sounds like the theme tune to a situation comedy about a family of serial killers who rape and pillage their way across Middle America while making face masks from their victims skin… err, or something equally as dark.

J Majik & Wickaman
Fleshwound (G Dub Remix)
Brookes Brothers
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Viper Recordings

Futurebound pushes up the pressure on his latest Viper Recordings release with a massive G Dub remix of one of the label's biggest hits to date, J Majik & Wickaman's 'Fleshwound'. And what an absolute stomper it is too - this is one track that will have the dance moshing like a party of epileptic Goths in a computer games testing lab.
Backing it up come BBK's brightest new hopes, the Brookes Brothers, with a percussive led beauty of a track which combines all of their signature sounds and trademark touches to excellent effect. Think radiating bass, tight beats and effortless musicality… lovely.

Telemetrik
My Lightyear (Act Two)
Black Sun Empire Recordings

Finally another release from Telemetrik is here. Let me just say this is one of the most exciting things in drum & bass right now. Some may think that's a bold statement, while others might think that's not a hard feat to achieve; whatever, if you're not impressed by what this man is doing then you should drop everything and go live in a cave and bide your existence eating moss and bats. From the electro-angst of 'Exit Civilisation' and the grinding synths of 'The Bane' to the incredible organic edits of 'Evil Exists' and the sublime electronica of 'Space Coke', every track on this EP is a work of art. Buy it twice!

Dissident
Pleuromeia / Universe Eat Universe / Oneiroid Psychosis
Subtle Audio

Three simply brilliant tracks from Russian producer Dissident on Subtle Audio, delving deep into that minimal tech sound that's all over the scene right now with sophistication and skill. 'Pleuromeia' is minimalism reified with its deep, repetitive sub bass, off kilter claps, quirky FX and beautiful keys that evoke memories of early 90s ambient. 'Universe Eat Universe' will appeal to all drum funk freaks as it rolls away on its perfectly edited classic breaks while constantly progressing through an evolving soundscape. 'Oneiroid Psychosis' harks back to the late 90s with its stabbing bassline, edited breaks and overwhelmingly dark vibe and while not the strongest track here is a welcome bonus on a single 12.

drum & bass reviews
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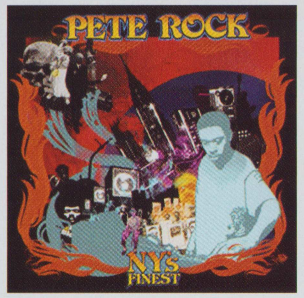
hip hop reviews

Reviews by: Laurent Fintoni, James 'Karamak' Drummond and Jesse Keene.

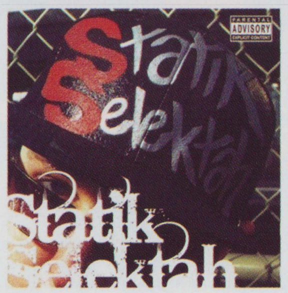


Pete Rock
NY's Finest
Nature Sounds

The soul brother returns to form with this full-length album, hitting our shores in March. The roster of guest artists reads heavy, with the likes of Raekwon, Redman, Masta Killa, Styles P, Jim Jones & Chip Fu (Fu Schnikens) to name but a few. The sound is a return to that old boom bap hip hop vibe, bound to appeal to DITC fans and the head nodders. OK, it's not ground breaking, but it is speaker smashing. 'NY's Finest' is a compulsive listen from beginning to end from one of the true masters of the game, and it takes you back to an era and sound that has been neglected by the scene for too long.

Sway
The Dotted Lines Mixtape
Dcypha Productions

Well Dcypha Productions are back in the place with another quality mix tape from the man like Sway! The lyrics are tight, while the humour is there in abundance, there is no doubt that being away for a year has not slackened this mans' delivery as he goes from strength to strength. The mixtape is a mash of heavy beats, skits and head nodding flows. Check for 'More LDN' (Sway vs. Lilly Allen), it's a new take on what our Lilly was trying to put across but to be honest he pulls it off better and there's a lot of clever content, which goes to show Sway is a force to be reckoned with.



Statik Selektah
Spell My Name Right
Showoff Records

DJ Premier's Showoff label suggests it's gonna be a good year for the fledgling label, with this quality release. Most people will be aware of this beat smith's name from his numerous collaborations with the likes of Nas, Wu-Tang, Royce 5'9, KRS-One and Mobb Deep. 'Spell My Name Right' is a mash of collaborations from some of the biggest names in the scene today. The diversity of rappers keeps the pace throughout while the beats never really let up, giving you that fresh out of the box mixtape vibe. This is a heavy affair and without a doubt one for all the true heads out there.

Various Artists
In Living The True Gods DVD
Stones Throw

For the many Stones Throw fans out there this is a no brainer. 'In Living The True Gods' is the second DVD from Stones Throw, crammed with 16 videos and some sick bonus features, including an interview with J Dilla, Quasimoto live on stage in 2000, behind the scenes footage of Oh No's 'Move' video and some crazy footage of Charizma and Peanut Butter Wolf in the studio back in 1992. There's a great collection of videos too including 'Monkey Suite', a dark animation that takes you deep into the world of Doom and 'Accordion', which has for me the best verse the Villain has ever written and from which the title of this very DVD was taken.

Pete Philly & Perquisite
Mystery Repeats
Unexpected Records

Straight out of The Netherlands, Pete Philly and Perquisite may embody a sense of fun with the funked up vibes of their music but these guys are definitely no joke! The verbal content of 'Mystery Repeats' is swift and concise, as Pete shows his versatility by dropping flows over all manner of soulfully arranged compositions from Perquisite, making this album a real joy to listen to. Far removed from the braggadocios stylings of their worldly contemporaries these guys really know how to put together a solid sound. 'Mystery Repeats' is a positive breath of innovative fresh air and a must for anyone looking for something that has some real substance. Subliminally dope!

MC Esoteric
Egoclapper
Brick Records

Boston-based Esoteric splits from his usual partner in crime and treats us to his follow up to 2006's 'A New Dope'. 'Egoclapper's' cut and paste approach makes this album a real attention grabber; there's no doubt he has skills on the mic but his production ability is on point too. Guest appearances keep this project up-tempo, with the likes of Jedi Mind Tricks, Vinnie Piaz, Celph Titled, Rack Lo and Raydar Ellis all making their presence felt throughout, whilst 7L provides the cuts. A head-nodding treat full of brash wordplay, crafty beats and sly samples this is an interesting listen from start to finish. Well worth checking out the next time you're down the local vinyl emporium.

Meta Beats
Live & Let Live
Associated Minds

Meta Beats come through heavy with 'Live & Let Live', a cool soulful piece of production, rhymed over with effortless ease. Drop this track in the club it'll have the screwface head nodders making moves like John Travolta. On the B-side 'Fuck With Me' brings an aggressive New York sound that you'd normally expect to hear Fat Joe and Terra Squad spit over, instead you get a crew trying to sound tough but instead sounding more like a group of pissed off teenagers, despite some clever word play. Still, 'Live & Let Live' is a nice track and well worth a listen.

Brotherman
Heart Of Dem / Bollox
Silent Soundz

Brotherman brings a smooth, summery, easy on the ear release for Silent Soundz that's got me looking out of my window wondering when the sun is going to come out. 'Heart Of Dem' is a slow minimal beat with Clapton-style guitar licks, keys reminiscent of Dre's '2001' masterpiece and a bassline that rolls. Simple but effective, with the man spitting with ease, as he does on the skanking ska leanings of 'Bollox'. Brotherman's style is reminiscent of Yungun, but with less lyrical intent, leaving you unsure of the angle he is coming from.

Various Artists
You Don't Know: Ninja Cuts
Ninja Tune

This 3 CD compilation has an impressive selection of tracks from the Ninja vaults and siblings Big Dada and Counter. In the time since the last compilation an even wider breadth of musical inklings and directions for the Ninja family seems to have developed. Among the highlights of 'YDK' are unreleased tracks from Mike Ladd, Coldcut and Mr Scruff alongside more recent tracks from Ghislain Poirier, The Bug and Roots Manuva. 'YDK' continues Ninja's proud history and affirms its standing as a musical institution. Keeping an indie label at the top ain't easy these days, but Ninja aren't about to give up and this release serves as a timely reminder of how vital they are.

DJ Krush
Ko-No-Michi
Sony

After 9 albums and a career spanning over 20 years, Krush finally releases a DVD that looks at Krush's history via his first international album, 'Meiso', his first U.S recording sessions and his 2006 world tour. In between we're treated to countless recording sessions, live shows and discussions between Krush and artists he's collaborated with including DJ Shadow, El-P and even Futura. However, where the DVD works best is in showing the extent of Krush's influence and the musical explorations that have taken him well beyond the boundaries of what many consider hip hop. Krush is more than a living legend of hip hop; he is part of a select few modern musical geniuses.

2tall
The Softer Diagram
Content

2tall returns for 2008 with an EP that's short but sweet. Opening with two instrumental tracks, including 'Grazing on Empty' which takes its cue from previous releases but goes one step further along an irresistible futuristic funk tip .The shorter 'Raise Your Head' flips the script with haunting chants and a loose riddim that transports you to a far away place. And then there's 'Trains', featuring Esaint, bringing you right back down to Earth with a solid groove, warm bass and Esaint's ode to trains told in an ominous manner with a gravel-like flow. 'The Softer Diagram' keeps it on point and showcases more of 2tall's wide musical influences. Here's to seeing more from him through 2008.

Eliot Lipp
The Outside
Mush Records

If there's one thing that's kept hip hop interesting recently, it's the increasing crossover it's enjoyed with various forms of electronic music: from the futurism of Dabrye to Rustie's bass-led sonic bombs. Hip hop was always about experimentation and we're finally seeing a new generation of artists re-appropriating this philosophy. Eliot Lipp has always drawn inspiration from techno and hip hop, and with this album he delivers 12 tracks that take cues from a range of styles. Warm synth melodies abound over eclectic rhythms powered by crunchy drums and irresistible basslines. 'The Outside' is the perfect embodiment of a new 'boom-bap' ethic that is keeping hip hop interesting.

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breakbeat reviews

Reviews by: **SOTO & Joe Gamp**

Rico Tubbs
Gangsters EP
Menu

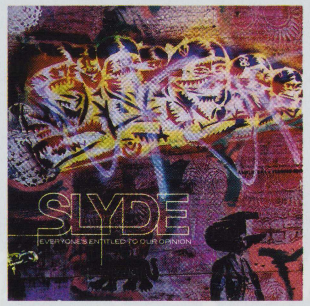
Some serious ass-gyrating action ahead of Finish sex puppy Rico Tubbs' album on this extremely strong three track EP. It's cheeky (is that the 'Quadrophenia' 80s rave stab?), booty bouncing, b-more style, rave punctuated breaks are destined for peak time party action. Complete with 'Gangsters' vocal samples and gun shots, I dare you to not shake your ass to this. 'Hot Girls, Dope Boys' sees early 90s style lush breakdowns wrapped round squelching bass and snappy drums, while 'Born To Bounce' maintains a similar vein and quality. An excellent fusion of booty bounce and the tingling sensations of rave!

Far Too loud
You Know The Sound / Turning Point (FTL Remix)
Funkatech

To celebrate their 25th release the 'Edit Meisters' FTL return with more thwacking, thumping and er…edits. The vocal even says the word! A right rollicking roller coaster of a track, built on a pounding 4/4, with signature techno synths and a catchy vocal. A track that will do well in breaks, house and techno clubs and that's the secret to FTL's growing appeal. On the flip DJ Mutiny's atmospherics get the FTL treatment. Deeply mysterious, swirling chords and profound, evocative subs get an intricately glitched up working that twists and turns like an epileptic trying to scratch an unreachable itch. Very tasty!

Shodan & Offkey
Boogie Down / Entity Remix
Purefilth

Guaranteed to smash it every time at bass loving establishments throughout the land, this is a real D&B styled nasty lickle roller. Brimming with oodles of dutty funk and complete with 80s BDP rap samples riding a rolling cut up 'Apache' break. On the flip, Entity proves that he's becoming a rising star for both his own label HCB and Purefilth. The intro lulls you into its 70s soaked funk then very nicely and unexpectedly drops into some elastic pipe action that's bouncier than a bouncy ball at a bouncers' convention. That's very bouncy.



Slyde
Everyone's Entitled To Our Opinion
Finger Lickin'

This is an album that really does pull in a wealth influences; spanning rave, breaks, hip hop, pop, electro and a good dollop of rock. That's not all - with the vocal talents of MC Lady Posh featuring strongly on the album, providing her trademark dance hall attitude. There's calculated commercial numbers like 'Sex N Drugs', and some stand out moments too; 'Kiss Kiss Bang Bang' embellishes electro funk with Lady Posh's cute MC stylings. 'Get this Good' is a really simple track, but when the bassline drops and combines with the sexy vocal it's very tempting indeed! There's a few 80's teen film-score tracks that may divide listeners, but all in all a well produced, diverse selection.

The Magnet Men
Arms length / You're the Type
Hardcore Beats

Hardcore Beats slap up the side of you head once again, with newcomers The Magnet Men. 'Arms Length' starts subdued; elements of spacey minimal techno with high pitched, fading submarine diving noises - all sounding deeply electronica. But just when you think that Hardcore Beats may be changing their philosophy, the break winds up into some stomping, tearing bass that's a raw, rough-cut and high-energy force. 'You're The Type' blasts techy, bass heavy rhythms. Devoid of any funk or atmosphere, this one delivers a full fat bassline and a cheesy rapido-rap that doesn't head anywhere but is a guaranteed by the numbers club banger

30 Hz & Baobinga
Twist Up
Body Snatchers ft. Kamikaze
Freaky Ho
Passenger

30Hz and Baobinga's 'Twist Up' is what's desperately needed in the breaks scene right now! An unusual crank-hop, so wrong but so right, lets break the rule book, type track that sets the dancefloor ablaze. These guys are on fire right now and this dirty, incessant electro-ghetto-rock bastard is a beautifully crafted piece of music, nay art. Just check the breakdown. On the flip 'Freaky Ho' lets you know that it's time for some bounce-tastic shenanigans, Miami style. A really dirty little number with a rasping bass line, cheeky vocals care of Kamikaze and a good time party vibe.

The Double A
Osclownyzz (Blende rmx)
The Broken Family Band
Love Your Man, Love Your Woman (Rogue Element rmx)
Lot 49

The new project from Lot 49 brings two related - or maybe unrelated - singles for release together. First up Blende's remix is a 4/4 electro, skinny jeans and maybe a directional haircut to match type affair. Complete with big fills, guitar drops, indie rock vocals and a filtered French disco feel. We are loving Rogue Element's work on the remix, turning in a very well crafted track. With intricacies a plenty this sexy slab of sleeze rolls out an important sounding bassline that sears and stutters on this pounding 4/4 gyrathon.

Drumatic Twins
Broken Planet / Can't Give You Up
Finger Lickin'

Nice, simple half step drums and then...Bang! A wobbly, evasive sub-bass kicks in, juttering and spluttering. 'Broken Planet' brings more of this increasingly common theme in breaks. Hypnotic, eastern-influenced synths tickle the squelching, murky beats before the electronics' overload into a nice neural explosion. Flip over for 'Can't Give You Up' which disappointingly lacks the forceful flair of the A-side. Sticking to a more generic, 4/4 structure, its housey beat, twisting synths and DAT manipulation culminate with a slightly contrived electro house sound, but its still good enough to lick up the crowd with plenty of rumble for your crumble.

The Losers
U Got The Boot
Pirate Breaks

After causing chaos with his radio show and frantic 'Dance Rocks' mix, the esoteric DJ and muso known as Eddy Temple Morris returns with Tom Bellamy. The Losers; the same scallies that served up the monster remix of Rage Against The Machine's 'Killing in The Name', have re-rubbed and rebuffed Candi Staton's 'U Got the Love'. This time it's classic, feel good house meeting stone cold thunder. Sharp snares and a fattened bass line are overlaid with live instrumentation, synth stabs and weighty breaks to help update this club classic without losing any funk. This house favourite has been plied with Red Bull and kicked out into the cold, only to end up at a breaks rave. A monster.

Red
Seen (Playsatan Remix)
Dealmaker

Exclusive! Exclusive! Fresh out of the hip hop inspired Dealmaker camp, Red is the new British turntable whiz. The original mix is made completely from scratch samples, mixing elements of fuzzy guitar and synth melodies into a glitchy but seamless head banger. What's relevant for us here though is the Playsatan remix, which will be included in the forthcoming Sony PSP 2008 advertising campaign. This is filthy, ragged, high-octane electro breaks at its best; guitar simulations are laced around synths, dirty rumbles, a distorted harmonica riff and a deep, electric bass sound. With exploding kick drums shaped into a pounding rhythm, it's a firestarter of a tune and a good heads up for breaks-inspired dance music.

10 Sui and La Resistance
Scandalous
Mob Records

10 Sui and La Resistance team up with Jimmy Screech from Roots Manuva's Banana Clan for a slice of song-based, dancehall-influenced breaks. The radio edit begins with an accordion, before shifting into a guitar-led half-pace breaks tune, until the pulsating bass and ragga rhythms drop in. The DJ mix skips the atmospherics; crafted for the club with extra weighty breaks and bass layered over some subby goodness. Tugg's remix sounds like the circuits have been bent over; whopping Kaos pads, disjointed 8 bit stabs and twisting vocals. Also check the sub-dub remix for a stripped back, chest plate invader. This release has a wide scope of styles and offers you plenty of ruck for ya buck.

Long Range
Just One More (Entity Remix)
Long Range Recordings

King of atmospheric ethereal rave and one half of the genius duo previously known as Orbital, Phil Hartnoll's been kind enough to let Entity beef up one of his epic soundscapes. The original's calm, subdued feel is backed up by digital samples filtering through pulsating synths and dark, synched basslines. If the original was an observation of life and call to be at one with it, then Entity's mix demonstrates the need to consume and then destroy it. Already stepped up in pitch by the weighty breakbeats and added hollow bass, yet more funk is blended into the already ethereal and emotive sounds on this remix.

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Reviews by: **Al Storm, Fracus & DJ Spinback** contact: Jason@imorecords.net / 07976298165 / www.imorecords.com

Ham & DMO
In Your Eyes
/ This Emotion
Next Generation

Fastly adding to its already legendary catalogue of releases, Ham teams up with popular singer / songwriter Donna Marie to ensure that the eighty second release on the label is as good as any that have gone before it. The A-side is typical of NG in its marriage of energetic percussion, programming and euphoric chord progression. Dreamy ethereal breakdowns supply further spine-tingling quality. Flip the disc over to find probably the stronger of the two tracks, something about the breakdowns and vocal has an 80s ballad feel about it, but is all 21st century hardcore in every other department. Two dreamy hands in the air moments for the price of one.

Flyin' & Sparky
Dancing In The Dark
/ Report To The Dancefloor
Warped Science

Finally out this month is the latest offering on Warped Science, an often overlooked but consistently solid imprint notching up its 25th and 26th releases this month, courtesy of a simultaneous release from Fracus & Orbit1, and this tasty piece of wax from Flyin' & Sparky. The A-side is a solid vocal workout with a familiar flavour! Typical F&S production tricks in evidence and a dancefloor reaction to match. The B-side is truly where it's at though, with the multi-tempo, ravey, bouncy, danceathon that is 'Report To The Dancefloor'. Top arrangement, huge builds and even a downtempo electro section all in one record? You bet. Another strong release out this month.

Fracus feat. Taya
Bring The Sunshine
Fracus feat. Donna Grassie
See If I Care
RFU Recordingz

With the approaching summer in mind already, 'Bring The Sunshine' is a feel good hands in the air vocal track laden with chord riffs, enveloping pads and glittering acoustic guitars. Bit crushed and bastardized vocal samples combine with extreme side-chaining techniques to create a thumping mid section also. On the flip is something a shade darker, as Donna Grassie makes a welcome return to vinyl in the form of this electro / freeform tinged workout. Lo-fi arpeggiated riff patterns, chopped and distorted loops and a grinding, driving bassline are all key ingredients in this somewhat progressive vocal anthem, already proving popular on the dancefloor.

Robbie Long & AMS
Wakey Wakey (Orbit1 Remix)
AMS
Step Back
Thin'n'Crispy Recordings

Two slamming pieces of 21st century hardcore production marinaded in the sounds and flavours of yesteryear to provide as energetic and ravey a slice of plastic as you're likely to find in 2008. The A-side is a minimalistic and bouncy rework of the original track with audio editing galore , making good use of the Ethos vocal and slapping it about a bit with some twisted T'n'C lazer style synths. Difficult to choose between this and the flip which is an equally energetic and bouncy affair with breakbeats, nostalgic stabs and all sorts of programming mayhem thrown in to good effect. T'n'C continuing to fly the flag for hi-energy hardcore in '08!

Breeze Vs Lost Witness
Rise Again
/ Sy & Unknown Remix
Futureworld

Immediately putting his new imprint on the map, Breeze teams up with trance maestros Lost Witness to create yet another infectious and consequently heavily supported vocal anthem. The original mix is typical in its arrangement and production quality with punchy percussion, glitchy vocals and uplifting chord riff patterns. The remix on the flip gives little away as to its perpetrators, and is much more euphoric and subtle than some remixes from the Quosh boys. Excellent synth, piano and string work, mirroring the vocal melody, combine well with a typically bouncy bassline and energetic arrangement. Essential plastic for anthem lovers.

Flyin' & Sparky ft. Charm
Down To You
/ Darren Styles Remix
Electrik Euphoria

Both mixes of this track have been doing the rounds for a while now and finally see a well deserved release on South Coast-based label Electrik Euphoria. The original version is a well produced and well written vocal anthem, with innocent and endearing lyrics lying effortlessly across a carefully crafted musical backdrop. The flipside see's the mighty Darren Styles add his typically tight percussion, foot stomping kick drum and relentlessly beautiful piano lines to the fray, with devastating effect on the dancefloor. Six releases now for the label that is home to the 'Geos Crew' and with further vocal anthems waiting in the wings things are looking good.

Euphoria feat. Wotsee & Tess Dreadhead
Final Goodbye
/ Pussy Like Bitches
Blatant Beats

For possibly the first time, an NG/BB simultaneous release shares a catalogue number! (If you found that fact interesting, you officially need to get out partying more). Two very contrasting tracks here, the A-side makes the most of Wotsee's lyrical talent and Tess's powerful vocals. Lyrically very strong from both 'guest' artists' perspectives, Vagabond doesn't disappoint either with energetic production, bubbling acid lines and uplifting riffs. On the flip, and back as his Dreadhead alter ego, we are treated to an intense distorted kickdrum and rap sample fest, complete with a euro gabba riff as infectiously catchy as they come. Consistently good.

Diverse, Reality, In Effect
Here Comes
D-ice, Reality, UFO
Luv U More
Higher State Music

Another brand new label hitting the stores this month, Bristol based Higher State opens up with a diverse bag of tricks courtesy of a host of artists. Electro-house-tinged rush-core on the A-side, with squealing acid lines, bit crushed samples and enough intricate programming to build a conservatory with. On the flip are actually two new mixes of what was originally Sunscreem's early 90s rave anthem 'Luv U More' (made popular by its timeless Paul Elstak reworks). Both mixes cruise along nicely, with the UFO mix just edging it in terms of musicality and complexity as my personal favourite of the two. Good to see yet another new label opening their account in style.

Fracus & Orbit1
In Your Arms
Deejaybee, D-ice & Reality
Touched (Remixes)
Infinity Recordings

Two upfront remixes rearing their heads on the consistent and long established Infinity Record label. Fracus & Orbit1's 'In Your Arms' made its way into the shops last year on Dusk 'Til Dawn Records complete with a bouncy remix from Alistair Storm, but the techy programming fest that is the 2008 mix finally see's the light on vinyl after proving popular in a highly edited form on Nukleuz's recent 'Hardcore Nation : Next Generation' Compilation. Lisa Abbott vocals, noise, audio manipulation and bounce are all paramount. Sy & Unknown turn in a high quality remix of 'Touched' on the flip, a track sure to raise the profile of this already popular Bristol production trio. Solid.

Billy Bunter & CLSM
Cry Your Tears
/ Warehouse (Cube:Hard Remix)
UK Hardcore

Two very contrasting and popular tracks here on the UK Hard imprint, both having seen much support from a variety of DJs on the circuit. 'Cry Your Tears' features the timeless vocal talents of MC Junior, whose voice reaches the 'Pretty Green Eyes' vibe deep down in all of us. This track is as catchy and well executed as anything he ever created with Force & Styles, and the pianos and production are typically high quality. Flip this over for the Cube::Hard remix of Hard Dance anthem 'Warehouse' originally released on Jon Doe's 'D' label some years ago. This remix proved popular on the first 'Hardcore Underground' album with its chopped samples, hypnotic arpeggios and layered loops.

Various Artists
Hardcore Coalition EP3
Hardcore Coalition

The 3rd Hardcore Coalition EP hits the streets and this is the strongest slab of plastic yet. Four tracks to choose from, with the Al Storm & Slipmatt Remix of JDS' 'Higher Love' dominating the A-side. Its legendary vocals, stabs and rhythms are all brought up to date in style. 'Trigger Finger' is also worth a mention; a stomping production reminiscent of early 'noughties' freeform with a tough kick drum, ravey rhythms, sweeping breaks and fierce acid lines, Devastate, Invader and Freestyle revive a sorely missed (and at one time hugely influential) take on our beloved sound. Please make more records like this. The AA has 2 strong productions from Drew Derivative and Karl Future, the latter of whom has been turning in some promising remix work of late. Good shizzle!

Various Artists
Electronic Records 25 LP
Electronic Records

As varied and eclectic a selection of tracks as you could wish for from this brand new double pack, out now on persistently innovative label Electronica Exposed. A host of artists feature, with particular highlights coming in the form of 'Danse Macabre' and 'Definition Of Freeform'. Ranging from uplifting and piano laden musical affairs, right through to full on freeform and audio manipulation-fests, this is a solid collection of thoughtfully produced music. With some scratches thrown in at the start of both records (remember them?) and even a classical theme to end the EP off, you can't really argue with value for money.

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dubstep reviews

Reviews by: DJ Markle & Chris G

TRG
Broken Heart Remixes
Hessle Audio

Romania's finest dubstep export TRG gets given the remix treatment courtesy of the effervescent Martyn and Hessle Audio honcho Ramadanman. Rotterdam-born Washington DC-resident, Martyn, gives 'Broken Heart' a bit of an MOT with startling effect. Already talked about as remix of the year in some circles and with Kode 9 caning it in every set, it's not hard to see why. A gloriously strung out, pulsating thread runs throughout, doffing its hat to Detroit and thoroughly hypnotising the dancefloor. Ramadanman deconstructs the original 2-step essence, stripping it back to the bare essentials, creating space and presence at once, respectfully reminiscent of yesteryear's pioneering sound. This will sit in your box for years.

Shackleton feat. Tenfold Vengeance
Death Is Not Final / T++ Remix
Skull Disco

The ever on point Skull Disco label continues its relentless march into the murky depths of dance music's future with a 12 that exudes vision and talent. The A-side is a natural progression of Shackleton's unique sound, with the complex percussive lines displaying more sophistication and intricacy than ever. The track's tempo has been dropped to around the 120 BPM mark, a move which further highlights Shackleton's ability to transcend genres, whilst maintaining an aesthetic that is still very much his own. The flip sees the head of Berlin's Hardwax record shop, T++, taking up remix duties. He applies his own brand of post rave industrialism to great effect, further broadening the appeal of this already magnificent 12.

Various Artists
Catalogue Part 1
Red Volume

Label boss Mikael Jergefelt aka Dermike has been steadily tending to his Scandinavian flock over the past couple of years and nurturing a blossoming imprint. The first release on his Red Volume label showcased the audio delights of L-Wiz and Ekstrak, swiftly followed by further heavyweight sounds from Tes La Rok, RUF and 12th Planet. On this 14 tracker you get the old sitting comfortably alongside the new, with fresh sounds coming courtesy of Finland's Neveready, Bristol's Forsaken, and Sweden's Hit By A Rock. It's good to see more labels stepping into the album and compilation market, providing a rich vein of quality dubstep music.

TRG
Time Is Now / They Know
Immerse

Immerse continue on their mission to push a diverse range of bass heavy music with a 12 from Romania's TRG. The A-side, 'Time Is Now' is a full on beast of a track that belies TRG's background in drum & bass. Heavily processed amen breaks are layered on top of a rolling half step backbone, creating a rhythm section that is bursting with energy. Further energy is added by tearing bass synths and a catchy woodwind melody, that is, dare I say it, reminiscent of a certain DJ Clipz. The B-side, 'They Know', is the real gem here however; providing deep, meditative garage vibes that move the body as well as the mind.

Zomby
Mu5h / Spliff Dub (Rustie Remix)
Hyperdub

It seems Hyperdub can do no wrong at the moment, with Kode 9 delivering track after track from out of nowhere, constantly redefining the label's identity. Hot on the heels of Ikonika's stunning 12 in February, comes this unexpected gem from Zomby and Rustie. The bleep infused, melody dominant theme of recent releases is in evidence once again, with the A-side 'Mu5h' an explosion of 8 bit colour that continues to set the label apart from the crowd. The B-side sees Rustie drenching Zomby's 2007 anthem 'Spliff Dub' in bleeps and crackle. The remix gives the track an entirely different feel, with thick, interwoven textures creating a sense of depth that is not found in the original. Top stuff.

Peverelist
Infinity Is Now / Junktion
Tectonic

Having firmly established his production credentials through releases on his own label Punch Drunk, as well as a more recent excursion on Skull Disco, the time has come for Peverelist to grace the Tectonic ranks. 'Infinity Is Now' displays both garage and techno sensibilities - but to merely describe it as a combination of the two would be a great injustice. It's a fantastic display of melody, dynamics, subtlety and progression that many would do well to take note of. 'Junktion', on the flip, is more upfront in nature, with pounding kick drums deftly combining with intricate, metallic percussion to drive the track forward. This magnificent 12 is set to be one of the most important releases of 2008.

Pinch
Dr Carlson / 136 Trek
Punch Drunk

After kick-starting the Punch Drunk imprint with his remix of Monkey Steak's 'Lighthouse Dub', Pinch returns to the fold for his first solo 12 on the label. Following the vocal exploits of his 'Underwater Dancehall' LP, Pinch uses this release to sink back into purely instrumental territory. 'Dr Carlson' is as fine a display of bass science as you're likely to come across, with the Bristolian using his considerable production skills to create a truly animalistic bassline that tears its way around the track's nether regions. '136 Trek' sees Pinch cleverly exploring 4/4 rhythmic patterns, with horror film SFX helping to create the kind of immersive ambience he is so well known for.

SP
Trust Nobody / Future
Tempa

Better known for his work as a drum & bass MC, SP has more recently shown the extent of his talent by swapping the microphone for the producer's chair. His efforts have been duly rewarded with a release on Tempa, one of the dubstep scene's biggest labels. While neither of the tracks found here are especially ground breaking, both 'Trust Nobody' and 'Future' do what they do very well. Both are big, bassy, half-step workouts that pay close attention to detail and display the subtle nuances that are necessary to make this kind of track work. Having received heavy rotation in recent Youngsta sets, these track's ability to tear apart sound systems and dancefloors is already well proven.

Distance
V / Present Day
Chestplate

I am not ashamed to say that every time I hear this track played at a dance, I put my head down and shove my way, bullish with desire, to wheel it up! Yes 'V' is hugely huge; massive chugging guitars that Slash would be proud off riff away with head banging abandon. Yes, I may be gushing, but I love it. The ying to 'V's yang is 'Present Day'; a gentle stroll in comparison to the crazed sprint of 'V'. Delicate key lines wash over waves of sub, gently coercing me to go and dig out my dusty VHS recordings of Twin Peaks, crack a few bevies and get spooked.

Cyrus
Whispers / Corruption
Random Trio

Back on his own imprint, Croydon chappie Cyrus welcomes us to his characteristically unassuming door and ushers us in with minimal fuss and some face-masks (you know the ones which block out the light, come with me on this). Inside, our senses are alert. We are submerged into a pool of protean sounds, ever shifting, yet with the low throb of sub to give us reference and something to cling onto. 'Whispers' is deep meditational music in powerful effect. 'Corruption' on the flip intimidates with a harder, uneasy edge. Once again, Cyrus takes his dubstep mode to places only he can go and I, for one, am with him.

Clouds
Under The Dancing Feet
Argon

Finish duo Dead-O and Samuli aka Clouds get their third release on as many labels, and deliver their most accessible track to date. Roping in a friend's little sister on vocal duties, the lead track is a beautiful blend of dreamy, fantastical visions and sprightly melodica flourishes ala Augustus Pablo on happy pills. With a bubblin' bassline as big as Senior Pablo's weed stash, and vibes a plenty, this should be tapping 'Night' on the shoulder and getting plays on Radio One. Come on Jo, you waiting for everyone else to play it first? Tsk. 'Worms' on the flip starts like a twinkly kids toy, yet beware; a beasty jumps out the wardrobe and make you shit your pants.

Randomer
Travelogue
Z Audio

The timing, it seems, is right for this 21 year-old North Londoner. This, his debut dubstep release, neatly coincides with his other talent, drum and bass, and a forthcoming release on Med School. 'Travelogue' b/w 'Foundary' form part one of a two part release. 'Travelogue' is all swirling, silky synths washing over rock solid beats giving off an air of Balearic decadence. 'Foundary' drives a stake of grotty analogue menace straight through a haunted heart. The second 12 allows further exploration of Randomer's epic style. 'Nothing Left' gallops around within a lost romance story only to drop into a filthy pit of riff heavy despair, while 'Lonely Planet' feels like the soundtrack to a nightmarish moon landing.

Reviews by: Joe Gamp, Jon Ethics, Jesse Keene, Markle and Jeryl Wilton.

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Benga
Diary of an Afro Warrior
Tempa

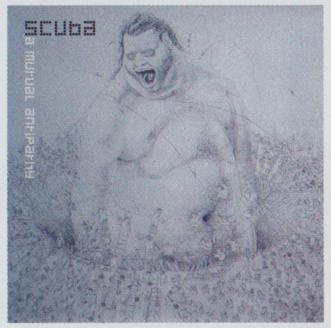
Featuring arguably the biggest underground dance hit of 2007 - that's quite rightly leaking into 2008 - with the Coki co-penned 'Night', Benga could probably shift a few units without the rest of the album being any cop at all. But there's not much chance of that happening now is there! Notably, the CD version of the album is very different to the triple pack vinyl. The 14 track disc contains club bangers 'Night', 'Crunked Up' and '26 Basslines', neatly interspersed within more lyrical gambits, including the ambidextrous 'Loose Synths' and off kilter wonk of '3 Minutes'. 'Pleasure' and 'Go Tell Them' proffer quirky vocals snippets, both manic and mysterious, that are perfect genre bending oddities. 'Zero M2' which opens the album brings proto-jazz licks and deadly drops, whilst the bolt–on spiritual horn of 'B4 The Dual' presents a previously released classic ('Dual' on Big Apple) in a new context and to a new audience. The house inflected 'Someone20' further challenges the dubstep envelope, clocking in around 120 BPM, yet retaining all the paraphernalia of a true Benga creation. The vinyl is an altogether different beast. Nine tracks of intense sonic pressure and as Benga admits himself, "When you go to the vinyl it's different, that's for clubs. I genuinely believe that when I make tunes for clubs, it's just dancefloor". Nothing more needs to be said. Purchase on sight.

Logistics
Reality Checkpoint
Hospital

Just 18 months after his debut LP, the 24 track 'Now More Than Ever', Logistics proves both his quality and astonishing work rate with his second album 'Reality Checkpoint'. Logistics is an artist who has always managed to combine musicality and soul with the production sheen and weight necessary for D&B dancefloors and you're just as likely to hear one of his tracks blasted out by Andy C at One Nation as by Cyantific at Hospitality. Kicking off with the disjointed, rolling brilliance of 'Daybreak Sequence', that trademark Logistics sound hits you straight away with its typically immaculate, driving and euphoric force. Don't be fooled though as 'Reality Checkpoint' is an LP that shows different sides to the young Cambridge producer's musical personality. The break heavy 'Lullaby', the pure junglism of the aptly titled '96', the melodic darkness of 'Waiting Line' and the Marcus Intalex inspired 'Glitch' are all stunning pieces of electronic music that reference some of the finest moments in drum and bass' evolution. Where the album really sparkles is on tracks such as the half-time, sinister 'Cold World', the gloriously experimental 2Step twist of 'Cocoon' and the syncopated bassline funk of 'Trying Times'. Brilliant, mature and bound to stand the test of time.

Naphta
Long Time Burning
The Fear / Ruff Revival

Naphta is a veteran of Irish D&B and was pivotal in the development of a scene that unleashed Calibre, Zero Tolerance and the jungle-orientated sound of Bassbin on the world. As a resident and founding member of Bassbin, the club night and label, Naphta's credentials are impressive. Now, after more than ten years in the game, and achieving over 10,000 downloads of his 'Grande Illusions' back catalogue compilation, he releases his debut album. 'Long Time Burning' stays true to the roots of jungle throughout: constantly shifting tracks exhibit infinite breaks, deep stabbing subs and a massive variety of soul, hip hop and of course ragga and dance hall samples. Proving a knowledge of reggae that is only matched by his knowledge of breakbeats, Naphta samples the entire spectrum and timeline of reggae from King Tubby to Sizzla to the 'Coolie Dance' riddim, giving his unmistakably junglistic sound an unusual and often modern twist. As such this album may seem pretty alien to the younger new-school drum & bass heads out there. This is a fact which Naphta is probably unconcerned with though, as 'Long Time Burning' will appeal to all those who have either become disillusioned with what D&B has become or simply have an interest in drum & bass beyond what is served up at the local kick-snare wobble emporium on a Saturday night.



Scuba
A Mutual Antipathy
Hotflush

Decamping to Germany has had a profound affect on Paul Rose aka Scuba. Still running the prolific Hotflush and Scuba labels from his Berlin home with a little help from the stateside Alex Incyde and a truly legendary international roster, this north Londoner has taken his imprint and sound undeniably global. While he has yet to adopt lederhosen and start making euro trance, the techno / minimal core of the city has clearly opened up new possibilities for Scuba. I could throw around more wild conjecture, but it's a fair bet that being so far away from the 'London scene' has probably allowed Scuba to start confidently exploring new pockets of sound and structure. This long player (in every sense, the tracks segue continuously together) is an opulent and serious digression from any standard dubstep template - and is all the more brilliant for it. The expansion of classic Scuba industrial crunch and groove means his soundscapes have moved, with great fluidity, into further areas of electronica and techno embellishments. This allows the beats to shift tempo and morph rhythm patterns, creating an album that ebbs and flows seductively, drawing the listener in with its magnetic power. Complete and assured, 'A Mutual Antipathy' is a dubstep alternative; the perfect balance between Burial's rusty emo-garage and Benga's full throttle techno.

High Contrast
Watch The Ride
Harmless

High Contrast takes up the duties for the latest installment of the 'Watch The Ride' mix series. Following previous mixes from TC and Zinc, it's time for the Welsh wonder to deliver his own interpretation of the D&B sound over 25 tracks and 70 minutes. Kicking off with his own remix of Axwell's 'I Found You' and finishing with his anthem of anthems 'If We Ever' the man with the curly hair delivers a searing mix of exclusives, modern classics and his back catalogue with inimitable panache. Massive, feel good anthems like Mistabishi's 'She Lied' and Brookes Brothers' 'F Zero' provide plenty of peaks across a mix that would proudly grace the mid-night dancefloor of Hospitality. Naturally, there are numerous exclusives from the Hospital camp, including 'No Words' from Logistics' forthcoming LP and Danny Byrd's post-modern jungle pastiche 'Shock Out'. Add to all this Lynx's ubiquitous 'Disco Dodo', Commix's sumptuous reworking of Rufige Kru's 'Is This Real' and Blame's brilliant 'Hindsight' and you've got a thoroughly tempting showcase of the sounds and selections that make High Contrast one of the biggest players in D&B with rare appeal beyond the genre. The 'Watch The Ride' mixes just keep getting better and succeed where most mix series fail; giving a true sense of each guest DJs musical mandate across a top notch selection of tracks.

album reviews

Atomic Hooligan
Sex, Drugs and Blah, Blah, Blah
Botchit and Scarper

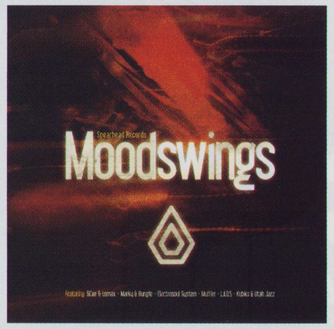
This latest album from Atomic Hooligan is a genuine progression from their last, without ever compromising that trademark Hooligan sound. Their well established musical theme continues on this new album, but with a larger focus on instrumentation and fresh sonic realms. Various genres are cross-pollinated and many an A-class artist appears. Opening track 'Dirty' brings the flows of Gang Starr Foundation's Afu Ra, creating a spacey, kicking track to warm things up. New single 'I Don't Care' has a more rocking, pumping feel to it with a blasé, care free vocal expressing total neutrality over a chugging bassline. The twists continue in 'Who's Ya Daddy Now?' as funk-licked guitars, low-end bass and synth echoes create a body winding, psychedelic hip hop tune. 'Papercuts' has a classic breaks feel, well suited to big crowds with its ascending synths, dropping beats and tearing bass. 'Do Me In' heralds more groovy rhythms and acute harmonics, nodding towards instrumentation and demonstrating a structured song writing capability, while the heavy bounce and bloated beats of 'Spread Good Vibes', back up the aggressive tones of UK stalwart Genasis Elijah. This album is the latest chapter in one of breaks most hopeful saviours; its creativity and ability far reaching into other worlds beyond the breaks' scene. Best breaks album of the year so far? We think so.

DJ Craze
Fabric Live 38
Fabric

Hoooo my god! The man who put the 'ism' into turntablism has returned to show off his incredibly tight mixing skills and prove he's in the world's premier league of scratch DJs (as if he really needed to!). On the latest Fabric cut, Craze shows he's apt at creating a heavy (relentlessly scratched) club mix without compromising his approach. It's true to say, his ear is still firmly rooted to the ground. The mix offers a more expectant hip hop slant; classic N.O.R.E is mixed into the flavours of the month Cool Kids, with the dirty Miami grime and grinding rhythm on 'I Rock' and 'Black Mags' setting a new tone. The boom-bap morphs into booty bass - the sound of now; a combination of sound system brashness, low-end frequencies and dirty jackin' house tempos. Imagine Switch crossing paths with Coldcut and Mixmaster Mike. Oh yeah, it actually happens on Switch's mad remix of a Coldcut slab. There's Blaqstarr's deliciously slutty 'Shake It To The Ground' blended with Miami Jam Crews' 'Pretty Girls' while the retro P-funk of Chromeo gets mixed into Treasure Fingers. The jackin', hybrid style remains, but Craze maintains originality by dipping his toe in familiar ponds. He's operating in different circles nowadays, but Craze still shakes the floor with a tight mix, demonstrating innovation within a growing sound.

DJ Krust presents
The Chronicles of the Cycle
Full Cycle

Everyone knows about Full Cycle and the impact that it, and its owners – collectively Roni Size, DJ Krust, DJ Die and Suv – have had on the drum and bass scene. Truly one of this music's biggest influencers, Full Cycle has always held an open mind with regards to the music it releases. This is something that DJ Krust's latest double mix CD displays perfectly, with a range of tracks that span just about every niche you could care to think of, all under one all-encompassing banner. Kicking off with his own 'Follow The Vision' and moving all the way across two CDs to Scorpio's (Roni Size & Die) 'Impact Music', this is a stunning display of what Full Cycle has achieved over the course of the last fifteen years. Obvious highlights are the sleek Ram Trilogy remix of 'Warhead', the perfect combination of Die and Clipz on 'Good Ol' Days', Die and Photek on 'Thunder' (ft. Hollie G) and the comic book characteristics of Krust's 'Kloaking Device'. Bundled up in this selection is a wide range of hidden gems from the back catalogue that some may not know or may have simply forgotten. If you want an opportunity to experience the wide ranging delights of the Cycle crew's history, then you'll find no better way than with this expertly blended compilation from one of the most versatile men in drum and bass.

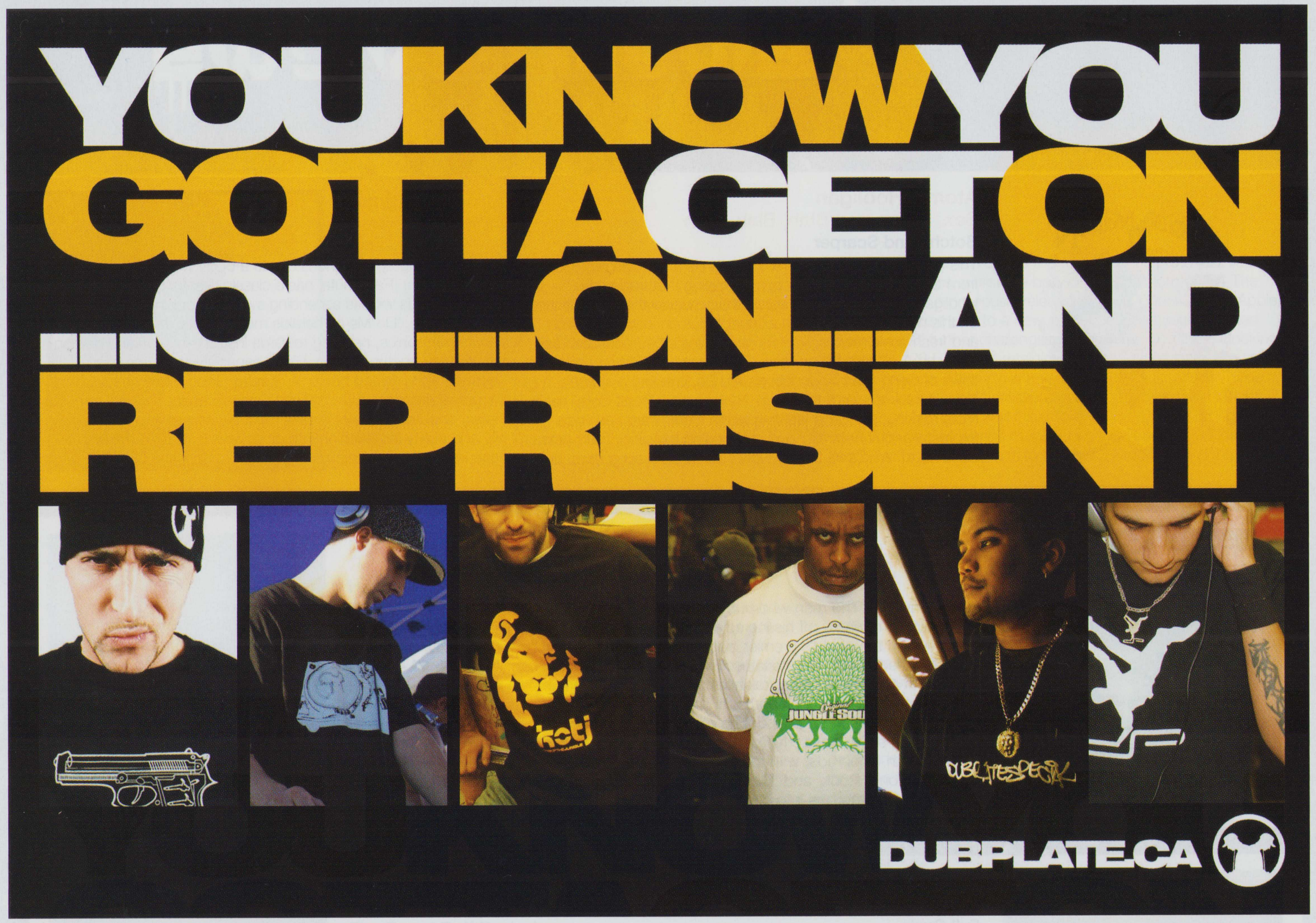


Various Artists
Moodswings
Spearhead Records

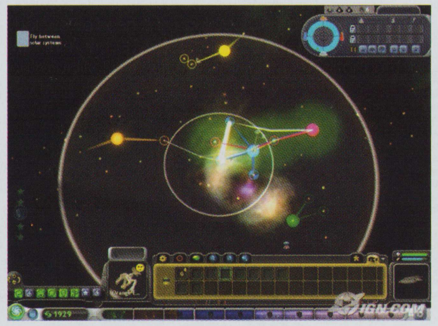
Spearhead Records is definitely one of the success stories of the modern D&B scene. Owned and run by producer BCee, Spearhead has released music from artists as diverse and respected as TC, Influx UK, Alix Perez, Danny Byrd, Atlantic Connection and Logistics since starting up just two short years ago. Now the time has come to celebrate the label's accomplishments and in order to do so BCee has enlisted the help of some of the finest drum & bass producers on the block to provide him with a seriously heavyweight compilation album entitled 'Moodswings'. The name may conjure up images of stroppy teenagers stomping round the house and blaring out nu-rave to their parent's dismay, but in actual fact the music on this long player is as mature as a vintage wine with all the refinement of an English gentleman. Picks here are the smooth and silky 'Let Me Tell You' from Marky & Bungle, the sublime BCee & Lomax remix of Electrosoul System's 'Moving In Transit' and the bass heavy Nu:Tone reworking of Lenzman's 'Caught Up'. If these aren't enough for you then there are 10 other strong musical D&B efforts to soak up from the comfort of your living room while sipping on a glass of brandy. Wearing your smoking jacket of course. Fabulous.

Guilty Simpson
Ode To The Ghetto
Stones Throw

The Detroit-born rhymer has been doing his thing for over 20 years now, which by anyone's standards is a long time to have contributed to hip hop culture. 'Ode to the Ghetto' is Guilty Simpson's long awaited and highly anticipated debut album. For the project he has worked with J Dilla, Dabrye, Madlib, alongside his long time Detroit based crew The Almighty Dreadnaughtz, to make a killer piece of hip hop which has all the impact of 12 rounds with Pharaohe Monch. The album erupts like a downtown riot, pulling no punches and verbally attacking with syllables and pronouns on a hardcore tip. The beats combine the sound of hip-hop, with those statutory synth driven riffs courtesy of the likes of the aforementioned Dilla and Dabrye. There's a dance hall sensibility thrown in for good measure. Production duties are shared by Madlib, Oh No, Black Milk & Babu making this a diverse listen with everything in the right places. It bobs and weaves like a bare fist fighter down at the abattoir, making this one of the first big hitting albums for 2008 and another sterling release from Stones Throw. Check out the tracks 'Footwork' and more so the 'Almighty Dreadnaughtz' where Guilty and co smash it over a Konnie Ross beat, which needs to be played at maximum volume, believe!



PREVIEWS



SPORE

Release Date: September 2008
Developer: EA
Formats: only PC confirmed so far.

For a year so young '08 has so far delivered, or at least promised to, with release dates on the horizon for two of the most delayed games in videogame history. First there was the rumour of a release date for the latest in the Duke Nukem franchise that got us totally hot under the collar and phoning and scribbling all sorts down, then EA announced that Spore, possibly the greatest game ever was 'finished as far as content is concerned'. Spore is essentially a game where you play god. Not 'god' as in some guy with wings on his helmet and a golden axe battling other 'gods' but actual god. It's down to you to design life from a single celled organism until you're actually attempting to play god with a whole planet full of whatever your organisms evolved into. At this point you hook up to the internets and become part of the massive Spore solar-system. Seriously this game is HUGE! You go through all the stages of evolution: Neanderthal, tribal, civilisation, space travel it's all in here. We haven't had a chance to play it yet but from what we've seen this could actually be worth the wait. With this and GTA 5 coming out in the same month, you're unlikely to see the ATM Games Editor out for a very long time.

BOMBERMAN LAND

Release Date: T.B.C
Developer: Hudson Entertainment
Formats: PSP / Wii

This doesn't really fit this month's theme, but I'm putting it in anyway because Bomberman is one of the greatest games of all time. This re-update includes a 'totally new and improved single player campaign', that, despite promising to 'take you on a fun-filled theme park adventure full of magic and intrigue', actually just sucks (IMO). There are also 50 added sub-games including skateboarding, laser-ball and some kind of fighting game, amongst 47 others. The game premise is that two of the Bombermen (the black one and the gold one) got into a fight on the Bomberplane, subsequently causing it to crash and e.x.p.l.o.d.e everywhere, destroying half of Bomberland in the process.

Now you (the white one, of course) have to put it all back together by going out and blowing even more stuff up. The problem with the sub-games, as with all sub-games, is that they are essentially sub-par versions of the proper versions of the game and a distraction from what you actually bought it for i.e. to play Bomberman. You can also now 'customise' your character with flashy different coloured outfits, hats and shiny shoes, if you indeed care about that sort of thing, and there is the (unwelcome) addition of a 3D play (yawn). Yes, there are lots of new bells and whistles here, but IMO the only reason any of you should be buying this (and make no mistake, ALL of you should be buying this) is for the original and best, blast-core Bomberman original. So far Hudson are only saying you will be able to play with up to four (boo) of your friends, but we're campaigning for online play. There are also about a billion new power-ups in this version. The classic boot remains, along with spiked bomb-upgrades, invincibility, invisibility and a weird spinning thing that lets you side-step bombs. I totally creamed R/H's MC Mekar ten times in a row on this game no matter how hard he tries to deny it, which was funny as hell (true story).

LIFE SIGNS: HOSPITAL AFFAIRS

Release Date: T.B.C
Developer: Spike Software

This is one of the weirdest games I have ever played. I think I'm basically supposed to be a doctor that every woman in the hospital wants to have over. Given every time I try to succumb to the female touch, the game immediately ends I guess I must be a gay doctor or something (not that there's anything wrong with that!). Or maybe it's because I don't want the woman in question to turn into my Dad like she does at the beginning of the game when I try and bend her over. I could never really get my head around these Anime' role playing games, so I can't work out if it's turn-based or not, to be honest. I couldn't work out ANYTHING about this game during the whole two weeks I had it. I just spent the whole time 'examining' my 100% young, female patients at the back of the tube / bus, hunched over my screen hoping nobody would catch me like the disgusting pervert I had become. I guess if this game has taught me anything, it's that I should never become a doctor, especially a school doctor. Maybe this game is good and maybe it isn't, but there are boobs in it and you get to prod them and stuff, so I guess that's good - in theory anyway.

REVIEWS

WORMS XBL

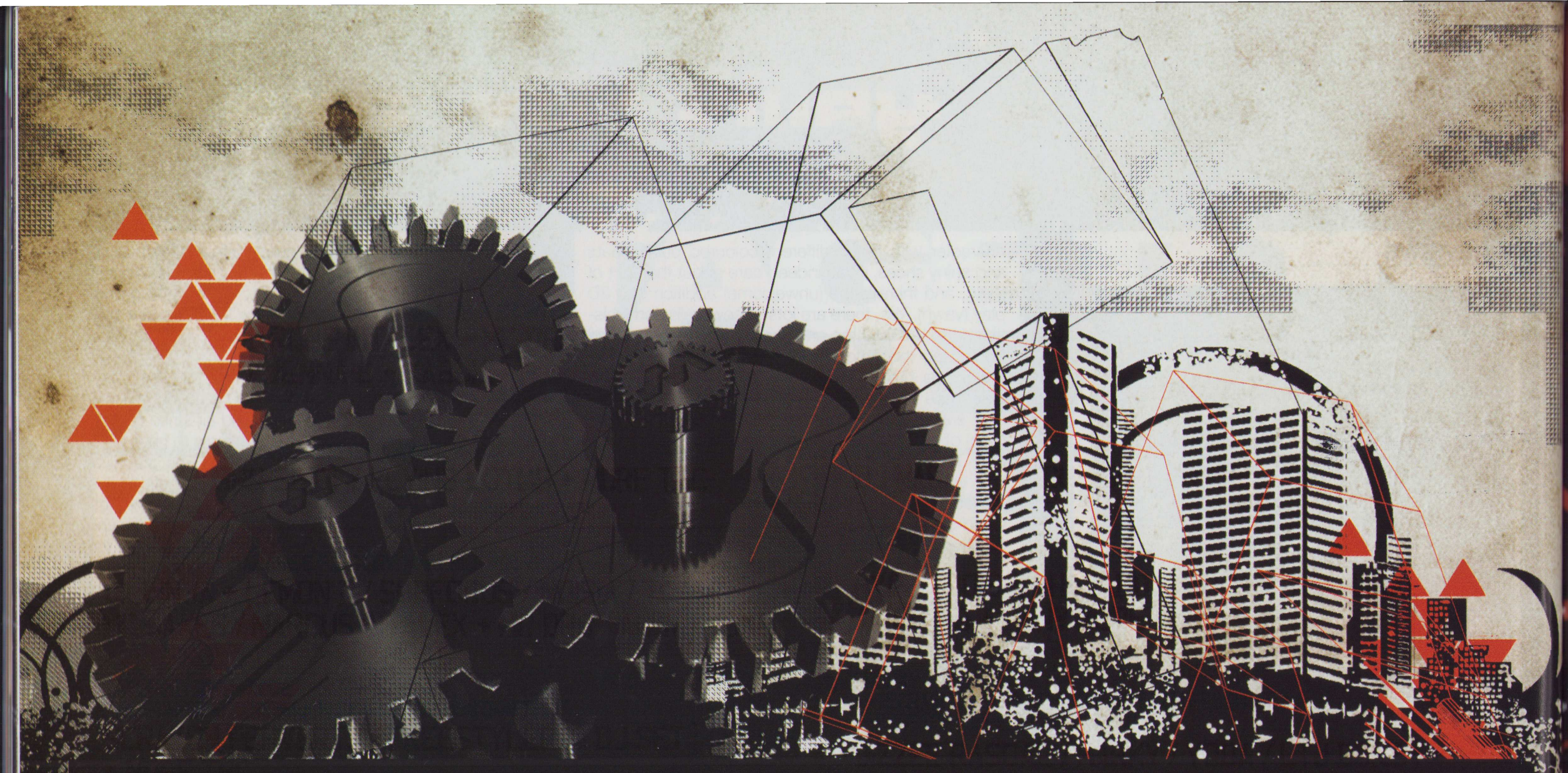
Release Date: 17th March 2008
Developer: TEAM 17
Formats: XBL

The king of turn-based combat is, and always has been, Worms. Exploding into the nation's consciousness way back when ragga-jungle was at its peak (ages ago), Worms has aged considerably better than that whole scene did. Fortunately Team 17 have decided to ditch the whole 'lets start doing 3D because everyone else is doing it' mindset and have returned to the original (and much better) side-view format we all fell in love with the first time around. Worms XBL is basically a graphically touched-up re-release of the old game for the real old-skool Worms-heads. There aren't any shitty 'new' sub-games involved and the developers have instead spent their time ironing out various nooks and crannies they missed back in the 90s. Your main weapon, as always, is your trusty Bazooka, and you need only hit 'B' for a veritable arsenal of W.M.D'S at your disposal. The classic exploding sheep and air-strike remain, although the 'old woman attack' seems to have been removed completely for some reason. The graphics, although simple, look great and really benefit from a HD set up. All the game maps are randomly generated, although they all seem to end up looking and playing pretty similar all of the time. Of course the main update is the online multi-player option. I hooked up my internet for a few games against Step 13's Nick Maule, but kept losing due to CHRONIC lag, so I typed in 'go fuck yourself', logged off and haven't spoken to him since. Shit I hate losing! Luckily there are some good single-player modes and there is a decent tutorial mode for those of us that have been 'out of the field' for a while. All in all, Worms hasn't lost any of its charm and is a welcome return to the pre-hi-res-gore-torture-and-murder-fest gaming has become. Definitely worth a download, best game of the month in my opinion.

PDC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DARTS 2008

Release Date: Out now
Developer: PDC
Formats: WII

Haven't you always wanted to be a darts player? So what if Jim Bowen allegedly turned out to be a xenophobic, little-person-hating, alcoholic. Wasn't Bullseye one of the best TV shows of all time? You remember even if the player flopped and lost, Jim would still bring out the star prize and tell the shattered contestant how amazing their life could have been if they hadn't ruined everything by being shit and a loser? That was the best part of the show IMO, that and when the announcer would say 'ONE HUUUUU-UNDRED AND EEEEEIGHTY! This game unfortunately doesn't feature Jim and instead puts you in the shoes of an unknown up-and-coming darts player, competing for the world title against a host of seasoned professionals. The tournament leads up stage-by-stage to a climactic battle against Phil 'The Power' Taylor, the undisputed king of the oche. The Wii controller, of course, is custom-made for this sort of game and the developers have made a good job of replicating the behaviour, feel and trajectory of the onscreen 'dart' as you throw. Unfortunately the game takes place in a proper TV tournament style arena as opposed to the sort of beer stained, East End drinking den darts lends itself to. The graphics although good-enough, don't dazzle, with the backgrounds and spectators pretty much remaining static throughout. The other main downside is that you can't 'accidentally' make the dart bounce off the metal thing that separates all the sections and fly off into somebody's pint like you can in the pub, and that's probably the best thing about playing darts. This game is pretty realistic and definitely a laugh, you even get better at the game the more pissed you get, just like with 'real' darts. The one thought I couldn't shake throughout testing was the whole '40 squids for a computer-generated simulation of a £5 dart-board kind of being a stupid waste of everybody's time and money', but when every copy of this game is sitting in a bargain bin for £9.99 this time next month I guess that will no longer be a problem.



METROPOLIS

MARCH - MAY EVENTS 2008

FRIDAY 28TH MARCH
THE CLUB AKA PARADISE FACTORY, MANCHESTER WITH...
BRYAN G / MARCUS INTALEX + MC DRS / LYNX
ALIX PIREZ / JENNA G + KABUKI

TUESDAY 15TH APRIL
FUSION AND FOUNDRY, SHEFFIELD WITH...
ANDY C [3HR SET] / FLYING LOTUS + MORE TBC

FRIDAY 25TH APRIL
THE CLUB AKA PARADISE FACTORY, MANCHESTER WITH...
DILLINJA + LEMON D / SUBFOCUS / NOISIA / TC +
MC JAKES / MARCUS INTALEX + MC DRS / AI / NU TONE

SATURDAY 26TH APRIL
THE STANNERY, TREMOUGH CAMPUS, FALMOUTH WITH...
SCRATCH PERVERTS / FREESTYLERS [DJ SET]
+ MORE TBC

SATURDAY 3RD MAY
THE OCTAGON, SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY WITH...
SCRATCH PERVERTS / VALVE SOUND SYSTEM FEAT.
DILLINJA + LEMON D / SUBFOCUS / SKREAM + MORE TBC

SATURDAY 3RD MAY
STYLUS, LEEDS UNIVERSITY WITH...
FRICTION / GOLDIE / RANDALL / NICKY BLACKMARKET
+ MORE TBC

SUNDAY 4TH MAY
BENEATH THE STREETS, MANCHESTER WITH...
ANDY C / RONI SIZE / DJ YODA / KRAFTY KUTS
+ MORE TBC

FRIDAY 16TH MAY
THE CLUB AKA PARADISE FACTORY, MANCHESTER WITH...
PLAYAZ PRESENTS HYPE / GQUB / LTJ BUKEM
+ MC CONRAD

TUESDAY 20TH MAY
FUSION + FOUNDRY, SHEFFIELD WITH...
DJ MARKY [3 HOUR SET] + MORE TBC

SATURDAY 24TH MAY
KEELE UNIVERSITY, STAFFORDSHIRE WITH...
HYPE / NOISIA / HAZARD / NICKY BLACKMARKET
ALTERN8 + MANY MORE

SUNDAY 25TH MAY
GATECRASHER SUMMER SOUND SYSTEM FESTIVAL,
TURWESTON AIRFIELD, NORTHANTS
DIZZEE RASCAL / MARKY / YODA / LTJ BUKEM +
MC CONRAD / HIGH CONTRAST / FREQ NASTY
SHY FX / SKREAM + BENGA + MANY MORE

SUNDAY 25TH MAY
VICTORIA WORKS WAREHOUSE, LEEDS
ANDY C / KRAFTY KUTS / MARKY / VALVE SOUND
SYSTEM FEAT. DILLINJA + LEMON D / FREQ NASTY
+ MORE TBC

FRIDAY 30TH MAY
THE CLUB AKA PARADISE FACTORY WITH...
MAMPI SWIFT / NICKY BLACKMARKET
MARCUS INTALEX + MC DRS
LONDON ELEKTRICITY [DJ SET]

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PROPHECY / STEPPA / MARK OD / TONN PIPER / SKEEZ

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diggin' in the crates

ROBERT OWENS is one of the finest male vocalists to grace electronic music, from its Chicago house roots right up until the present day. In more recent times he's laid down lyrics with Drum & Bass artists, including his haunting contribution to Total Science's 'My Dreams' on Hospital Records and his soul-deep swing on MISTICAL's 'Believe'. With a career that goes back some 20 years plus, we thought it only right to ask Robert to talk through some of his musical inspirations. Check it out, you might just learn a thing or two.

Rance Allen
Ain't No Need For Crying
Back when I was still discovering music in my neighbourhood as a teenager and trying to start a band, this was the track I always turned to whenever I was feeling a little down. It never fails to lift me up onto my feet and inspire me to keep on. The intensity of his smooth falsetto vocal and the warmth in his expression has a soothing effect that could help anyone through the obstacles in their life.

Haji & Emanuel feat. Robert Owens
If
Lyrically and vocally this is one of the tracks that I'm most proud of. The message behind the song is one that is very personal to me. A lot of music nowadays in the charts is too happy-go-lucky and lacking in genuine sentiment and emotion. One of the things I consider very important in my work is to try to connect with my audience on a human level, and out of all the tracks I have made I think my lyrics in this track do this as much, if not more so than any other.

Talking Heads
Once In A Lifetime
This is definitely one of my favourite tracks, with such a great hook and a positive message. When I first heard it, I remember thinking how it was the total reverse of the sort of Motown stuff I had grown up on. It really inspired me to look abroad to England and Europe for more music, and I became fascinated by the whole punk thing because it seemed so different to anything else happening at the time.

The Clash
Magnificent Dancer
I love the Clash. They're most famously associated with the spirit of punk, but on this particular track a really deep soulfulness comes through. This is the sort of track that makes me think I'd like to do a rock track someday.

Shirley Bassey
Goldfinger
'Goldfinger' is definitely one of my favourite Bond films and I was a big fan of Sean Connery growing up. Bassey is such a powerful singer and this song sums up everything about who she is – a big, classy voice and a sexy, almost sleazy sound, which you can't help but love.

James Brown
Dog On About It
This is a more soulful James Brown track that a lot of people won't be familiar with, but I think it's easily one of his best. It's got a great message about persevering in times of trouble. There's such strength and a real sense of urgency in his delivery. You really felt like he could cut right to the core of what you were thinking whenever he sang. A great loss to the music community.

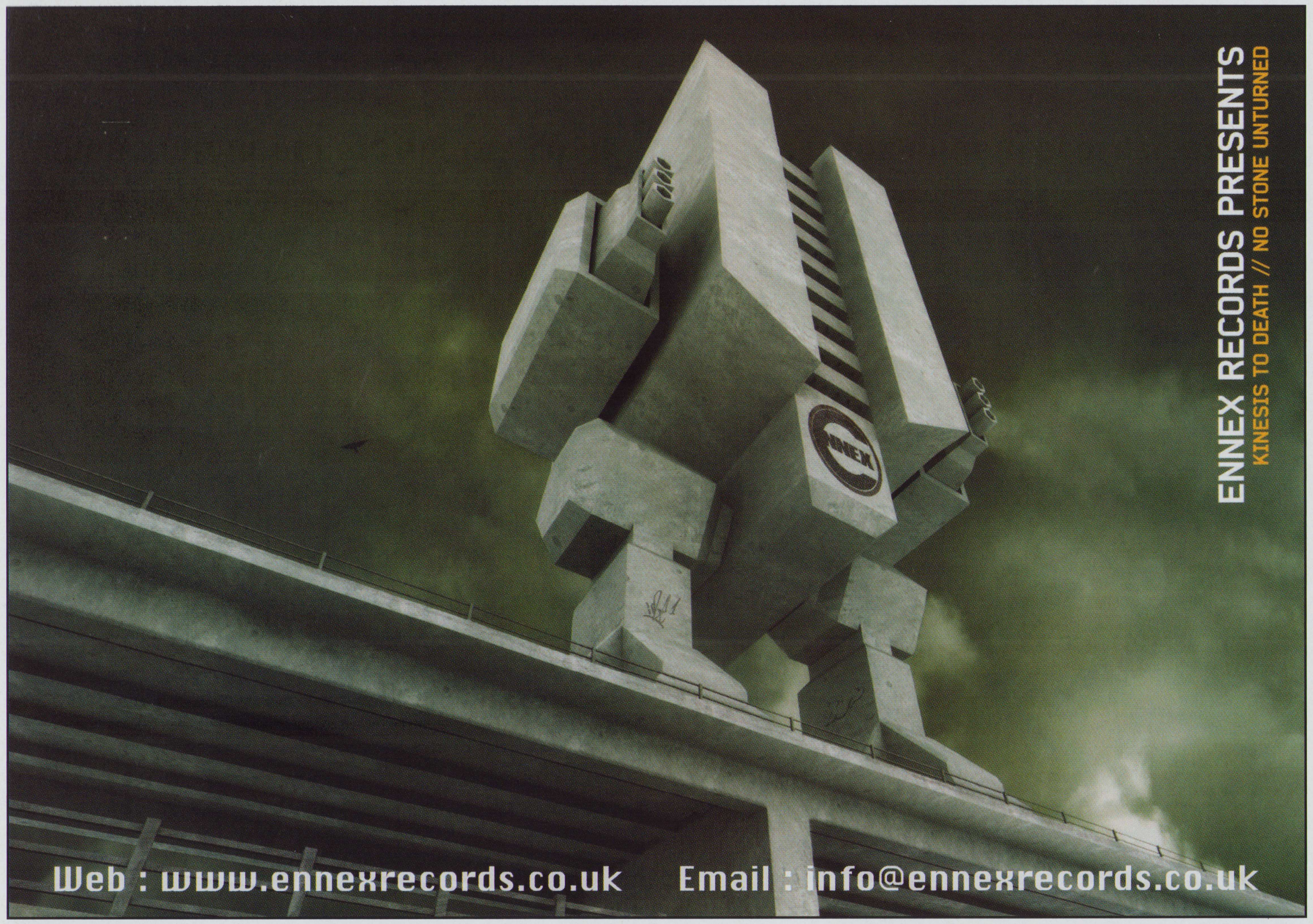
Walter Hawkins
Be Grateful
I remember walking past the James Cleveland church near me one day when I was younger and hearing this great female voice coming from inside. The voice belonged to a great woman called Penny, and it was through her and this song that I was inspired to join up. It's a song about taking the good with the bad and moving on; about the importance of experiencing difficulty in order to appreciate the good. It's a song that means a lot to me and really reminds me of my roots in the gospel church.

Donnie Hathaway
Song for You
This is one of those songs that you hear and think, 'I wish I'd written that!'. Donnie Hathaway is, I think, one of the greatest singers of all time, particularly when it comes to conveying feeling – there's such sincerity and emotion to his voice that is utterly convincing. When you hear him you really feel that he's lived what he's singing about. Lyrically it tapped into whatever he was feeling at that time in his life.

Teddy Prendergast
You Can't Hide From Yourself
The message in this song is very important to me; treat people in your life the same way you want to be treated, because negativity will come back to haunt you. Teddy really believed in what he was singing too. In this track he's really screaming at you, kicking you into action. He really makes you want to take heed of what he's saying; to spread his message.

Machine
There But For The Grace Of God
This song always makes me feel nostalgic for my wonderful disco days in Chicago, sneaking into The Dan One club to hear Ron Hardy play. Disco has this great recurring theme of 'hope out of despair' - a theme that helps give it its uplifting message - and this is definitely one of those tracks. This was such an important time in my musical development and this song is the track that most reminds me of this great time in my life.

Robert Owens 'Late Night Stories' is out now on Compost Records. myspace.com/robertjowens



city scene

Words: Saburuko Pix: www.sleepdep.ca

BROOKLYN (NYC)

Most people's notion of Brooklyn is garnered from movies and, to many, it probably isn't all that good. That's why we have decided to take you on a little tour of our adopted home, a place that can be considered the 4th largest city in America, Brooklyn.

I think part of the appeal of living here is that Brooklyn has such a mixture of people, cultures, architecture and park land, yet has a more relaxed feel to it than the constant hustle and bustle of Manhattan, that, for the most part, people confuse as being New York. So let us take you around some of the places in Brooklyn that we consider to be our favourite spots, and of course give you a little brief history lesson on this great city.

Brooklyn was initially a Dutch settlement (the name has been Anglicised over the years from its original form of "Breuckelen"), but was ceded to the British after the second Anglo-Dutch war. Many of the buildings in downtown Brooklyn would not look out of place in Amsterdam or London and perhaps that lends itself to some form of comfort for us ex-pats. Additionally, Brooklyn played a significant part in the American Revolution and many sites lay claim to great battles between the retreating American forces led by George Washington and the British army (that had amassed 200 ships with 30,000 men after being run out of Boston).

So our first stop is the former Brooklyn ferry point that pre-dates the bridge as a means of crossing into Manhattan. Not only are the views of both the bridge and Manhattan spectacular, but if you look on the ground you will find a host of brass plates that depict many significant historical facts. Looking up, we see Brooklyn Bridge, a mammoth construction that took 13 years to complete in the late 19th Century. At the time of its completion it was the longest suspension bridge in the world. 27 people died during its construction and a week after opening a rumour about it collapsing caused a stampede that resulted in a further 12 people being killed.

Any visitor to New York should take the opportunity to walk the bridge, as the views of both its marvelous gothic architecture and the Manhattan skyline are a sight to behold.

We set off from the ferry point into the heart of Brooklyn Heights, a quiet residential neighbourhood that backs onto downtown Brooklyn. On this occasion we forgo downtown, with its Starbucks and KFC's, for a walk along the Brooklyn Heights' promenade. The promenade itself runs parallel with Manhattan so our casual stroll conjures up some of the most spectacular views of the city and its famous skyline. Whether you do this during the day or night, make sure you have your camera with you.

We head from here to Atlantic Av. and to an oasis of Britishness deep in the heart of Brooklyn. The Atlantic Chip Shop is a British owned and run pub/restaurant, and it's here that you find the largest selection of British beers in New York, along with the best fish and chips this side of the pond. Add to that the English football and rugby that's always on the telly; this is a welcome retreat and an excellent opportunity to forget where you are for a brief time. Make sure you tip the bartender if you ever visit and get talking about D&B and you never know how that conversation will go.

The next stop on our journey is Park Slope, an area of Brooklyn that is very similar to Kensington in London. The area was first inhabited by the Canarsee Native Americans. The Dutch colonised the area by the 1600s and farmed the region for more than 200 years. During the American Revolutionary War on August 27, 1776, the Park Slope area served as the backdrop for the beginning of the Battle of Long Island, also called the Battle of Brooklyn, the first pitched battle between the British and the Continental Army under the command of George Washington. In this battle, over 10,000 British Redcoats and Hessians routed outnumbered American forces at Battle Pass. What appeared as a major defeat for the colonials was actually the first of many of Washington's tactical retreats. The historic site of Battle Pass is now preserved in Prospect Park, and on 5th Avenue there is a reconstruction of a stone farmhouse where a countercharge covered the American retreat.

Park Slope is characterised by its historic buildings, top-rated restaurants, bars, and shops, as well as close access to Prospect Park, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, the Brooklyn Museum, the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, and the Central Library of the Brooklyn Public Library system.

5th Avenue is home to a wide array of the above mentioned restaurants and shops, and a special mention for us goes to two of our favourite hangouts. First up is the Gorilla Coffee Shop (97, 5th Avenue), which has to have one of the best espresso's in New York and trust me when I tell you coffee is uber important to New Yorkers, so to get to this level of consistency speaks volumes. Next up is a little store called Premium Goods (347, 5th avenue). This is the best, maybe even the only nice sneaker store in Park Slope. It's a small shop, but they have pretty good stuff and the guys who work there are nice. They have the shoes up on the wall and some in the window display. They also have a small glass case for some nice and more exclusive shoes. There is also a small selection of tee's, hoodies and jackets from Premium Goods (the store's own small line), Nike's, 10 Deep and others.

So onwards we go from Park Slope, through Prospect Park, eventually exiting at Grand Army Plaza as we head to the Brooklyn Museum, located at 200 Eastern Parkway. It's the second largest art museum in New York City, and one of the largest in the United States. One of the premier art institutions in the world, its permanent collection includes more than one-and-a-half million objects, from ancient Egyptian masterpieces to contemporary art, and the art of many other cultures.

That basically ends our little tour of what we like to call home, and, fortunately for us, we happen to live 10 minutes from the museum so it makes the perfect end to it all. Remember New York isn't just Times Square or the Empire State Buildings, it's five great boroughs, of which the largest (Brooklyn) is for us the best. As a result of its inspiring richness and diversity of people and surroundings, we reckon you'd be cheating yourself if you came and didn't explore places other than Manhattan.

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world scene

Words: MC Sandor

SWEDEN

The history of drum and bass in Sweden has been a long, winding and gully ride. Most of the early originators have gone on to other pursuits – club promoters Deep in Bleep, producers Dragonfly and Mindbender of Cheeba City, Steppin' Razor Records, the early collaborations of Sting Ray, Fluid Records, and the In-Side crew have all left the scene but their legacy lives on, setting the example for today's aspiring players.

STOCKHOLM

Stockholm is said to posses a striking natural beauty – apparent in its vast, glittering expanses of water, and in the people living on its shores. Most guest DJs leave with a soar neck, for some reason.

Talking about Swedish drum and bass, one must start with Seba and his Stockholm-based Secret Operations records. He has gone on to achieve international recognition – lately through his long time collaboration with Paradox, and recent signings to Metalheadz and Hospital. But from the humble beginnings of Peanut Planet, Seba's first outfit in 1993, through the Good Looking years and the introduction of the label in 1999, Seba's rise to fame has been a long ride. Seba's been closely linked to co-workers Lotek, myself, DJ Holmes, Lenk, and eventually the talented vocalist, Robert Manos.

Likewise Krazy has a long, successful history in Stockholm's d'n'b scene. He has for more than a decade and a half tirelessly introduced the quality flavours of d'n'b to Sweden, as a producer, DJ, club promoter, radio show host, record shop manager, occasional label boss, and general music devotee. With the legendary Fastfood club, he and promoter J Slick set a standard that is still to be surpassed.

Little known outside Sweden, but certainly accomplished, Special Branch crew held the junglist banner high since 1994. Rudeboy D, Crucial B and MC Slim have unfortunately stopped promoting clubs and playing out as a crew.

The Stockholm scene experienced a period of intense growth between 1994 and 1997 - clubs were established, crews' formed, and the summer festivals brought a string of celebrity DJs. The ground for a generation of producers was built. Unknown Factor is perhaps the most well known of these, others include Blito, Celestial, and Under Ten Hurtz crew. DJs to emerge during these years were, amongst others, Steel, Selecta Sharp, and Furiouz.

Sweden's most successful d'n'b promoters, dB crew, started out in 1998, alongside the likewise legendary, although short-lived, DNA Social Club. The DNA crew were true pioneers, promoting the deep atmospheric styles, giving a whole generation of Stockholm heads a chance to truly make d'n'b, "the soundtrack of their lifestyles". But it was dB that was to become the main institution of the Stockholm scene, thanks to the hard work of J Slick, Lucho, Blito and Yallow. Their diverse but consistent style, ability to stay on top of the game, and long time dedication has put them on the frontline, and kept them there to this day.

They are closely followed by Rekyl crew, the project of brothers, Toni Bassi and Boj Lucki, who serve Sweden with guests like the legendary Goldie, LTJ Bukem, DJ Hype and Fabio but also new stars like Commix and Benny Page. Probably the most networked promoters today, they play an important role in the scene, having made the reggae-inspired melodical style their signature. They promote it through the label Mir Records, and their producer outfit Mir Crew. With the help of turntablist and producer Ljudas, they have released on labels like Shout Records, JungleX & Nuttah Beats. They make good use of the vocal talents of singer Joey Fever, both live and on record.

The friendly manners and versatile style of DJ duo Trickykid and Fonetik, a.k.a. Quiet Earth, played a great part in their well-earned success with the Various BPM club nights.

Long time club promoters and music personalities Ingmarie Pagenkemper and DJ Johan Netz has recently started out a series of d'n'b nights at a classy Berns venue, where they provide a perfect context for the trend-conscious crowd. Goldie's opening visit was an absolute success. Next up, Lady Storm.

Traffic crew has been struggling with the club promotion business for years now, keeping it underground, promoting a harder, darker sound. Lately, the crew have enjoyed more publicity, and have a full schedule for this spring, including names like EBK, Klute, Loxy, Seba & Krazy, etc. If you haven't heard of producer duo Cold Jazz and Wezzler yet, make sure you check them out! Another interesting talent to remember is Mishko, whose ethnic sound is on heavy rotation at Rekyl.

The ladies flavours have for many years been represented by the one and only Miss Cicci Moon, whose uncompromising style put her among the best. Young and talented P-Lo showed her steez a couple of times also.

English not being the first language of most Stockholmians, MCs have been a scarce luxury. Yours truly started out well early, soon to be joined by London natives MC Slim, of Special Branch fame, and MC Nitra – the three of us catered for most venues during many years. Johnny Z & Rhymatic passed through, followed by Uppsala based Liverpool-native Sonny, but his tragic death left the three of us to tend to the masses, backed up by vocally versatile KK. The emergence of Rekyl brought along young, gifted reggae singer Joey Fever, whose rootsy 'singjay' style soon became a crowd favourite.

Not enough yet? Well, if the jumpup business is your cup of tea, Nuff Flava' crew will have it brewed in no time. Want something even harder? Better look out for Full Contact crew, whose strict techstep sound is taken to a new level by producer T-Tech. For those with a twist for the bizarre, I warmly recommend Inferno crew, who show an amazing dedication to the legacy of the morbid Freak recordings style.

COUNTRYWIDE

The West Coast has been bubbling from the start. Gothenburg's legendary Sound of Habib collective used to promote d'n'b through their club nights. Struktur crew has been around since 2002, and is now run by Leaf and Social. Bionic1 and Infuse are local producers that need to be mentioned.

The heads in the South country are blessed by Malmoe-based, DJ Moonbass and Yoshi, promotors of Big Bad Bass, Bass Addict and DJ Cammonition. Those into hard techy flavours are catered for by Leet recordings, headed by Phono, who runs an internet radio station as well, while Poka runs Southern Connection, a well-visited internet forum.

Up north, roughneck junglist soldiers Zealots keep representing the Northern Tactics vibe in Umea, lately joined by producer Subcomandante. The University town of Linkoping is homebase to the Conscious crew, sporting renowned producers Tectonic and Miklo as front names.

The scene in Uppsala was once vibrant with energy, as Klubb Atom promoter Wayne Miller and the late, great MC Sonny kept shocking the crowd with pure bass. The tragical death of Sonny left us stunned – his unbreakable energy, tight chatting style, and outspoken lyrics will always be remembered with reverence. There is hope for Uppsala though with local DJ Henke and the Traffic nights. Lately, Karlstad has started claiming their corner of the map –with DJs Megatron and 2Stars.

FINAL THOUGHTS

As you can see, Sweden's drum and bass scene seems to be in good health at the moment, despite the ups and downs over the years. Being driven by the contrasts, new talent keeps rising steadily. Since the disappearance of the internet forum Clubdecks, there have been a great need for an information platform, a place for discussion, events promotion and networking, especially in a country-wide perspective. Even though many turn up at the different club nights, there is always a need for dedicated enthusiasts, who are not afraid to take stance and show their love of d'n'b. Venues are scarce these days, especially ones with a good sound system and a proper policy. To sum it up on a personal note; it has been a great journey so far, and I can't wait to see where we're going next!

V CYCLE
QUE CLUB, BIRMINGHAM

Not many phenomenon's can reform 10 years later and still cause hairs to stick up on the back of necks, but the coming together of Reprazent caused a wave of excitement not seen in a drum 'n' bass for a long time. Like many, I came into jungle, just as the Roni Size and Reprazent era was fading out, but looking from aloft from a balcony in the re-opened Que Club, it wasn't hard to imagine the impact this collective and their music had on the underground.

Many acts have tried / are trying to fill the hole and the difficult task of taking drum 'n' bass live, but many have failed. Reprazent have the history, music, and individuals to make this a show to be remembered. All the classics were performed, including 'Brown Paper Bag', 'Share The Fall' and an interesting rendition of my personal favourite 'Trust Me'. New material like 'Don't Hold Back', written by possibly the best and most versatile frontman on the UK underground scene, Dynamite MC, were thrust upon the midlands massive, as he and Onallee picked up where they left off.

Innercity Dwellers, Bryan G, Zero Tolerance and the rest of the V family were on hand to keep the party live before and after the main act, but let it be known, Reprazent are back.

Words: Jordan V

SUBDUB – EXODUS / DMZ
West Indian Centre, Leeds

Subdub's Exodus / DMZ event has been leading the way in the Leeds' dubstep circuit for some time now, and stepping out of the taxi to be met by a serpentine queue of unprecedented proportions, it was clear this monthly celebration of bass had already reached somewhat legendary status. Probably the biggest night of its kind in the North West, this night had ravers making the pilgrimage from all over the UK.

Entering the main room, faces contorted in shock and awe as they encountered the infamous Iration Steppas sound system for the first time. No lights. No lasers. No visuals. Just the undeniably fascinating sight of a few hundred bodies bouncing and rippling along to some fiendishly low frequencies and finding ways of moving to some of the most off-kilter dubstep rhythms.

Over seven hours, nine DJs explored the ever-expanding limits of the dubstep sound, incorporating influences as diverse as techno, reggae and grime. Hosts Digital Mystikz (Mala & Coki) and Loefah, also responsible for the bi-monthly DMZ event in Brixton, brought their dub and jungle values to the fore, alongside fellow southerners and major players in the scene: Pinch, N-Type and Youngsta, showcasing their own unique brands of sub bass heaviness. Also on the bill were newcomers Quest & Silkie, Cotti & Cluekid and Japan's Goth-Trad, who dazzled the crowd with a massively energetic live Ableton set.

Headlining room 2, on the Sweet Potato Sound System, was Commix. After some dancehall, jungle and dub from Exodus, Sammy Dread, Junglist Alliance and Earthpipe, Leeds' Ant TC1 notched up the tempo, unleashing his d'n'b selection on the eager crowd in preparation for the main act. Commix are no strangers in Leeds and this set was full of proven crowd-pleasers and new dubs alike. As confirmed by the recent 'Call to Mind' LP, this Cambridge-based duo are going strong, and the West Indian Centre faithful were as receptive as always. Leeds' Steppa and Shock rounded things off in room 2, with local MC Andlar and Manchester's Tonn Piper on the mic all night.

These two scenes look set to increasingly converge, at the same time as moving in truly distinct, constantly unpredictable musical directions. Exciting times.

Words: Joel Stein

WEEKLY EVENTS

LOWDOWN @ THE PURPLE TURTLE, Gun Street, Reading. Every Saturday. 9-4am. Free Entry. www.lowdowndnb.com. Jungle special with Dj Reload. Residents include: Dj EQ, Dynamic, Bedlum, Rapid, C4, Rosco, B-ill, Hatherz with special guests each week.

MOVEMENT @ BAR RUMBA, 36 Shaftsbury Avenue, London, W1. Every Thursday. 8pm-3.30am. £6. Info: 020 7735 7577. Residents DJ's plus guests on weekly rotation.

SWERVE @ THE END, West Central Street, London WC1. 22.30pm-3am. £5NUS/£6. Every Wednesday. D&B / Liquid Funk with Fabio, Bailey, Flight plus guests each week.

JUNGLIST ALLIANCE PRESENTS: BASS BAR @ DQ / THE LATE BAR, Every Thursday. Fitzwilliam Street, Sheffield., Every week with Guest DJ's / MC's Local and international. 9pm-3am. Entry £3.

CHEEKY MONDAY @ WINSTON AMSTERDAM, winston kingdom, warmoesstraat, centrum, amsterdam. 10-4 every monday. 5 Euro on the door. www.cheekymonday.com. resident djs include: adi-j, loco, sinistah, kaper, and mc lenny len + special guest djs from the international dnb and jungle scene.

XPRESSION @ BAR VINYL, Bar Vinyl, 6 Inverness St London, NW1 7HJ. 8pm-Midnight. Free entry. Every Wednesday from 8pm till midnight Dymond & guests will be showcasing the freshest beats in all styles of Drum & Bass without discrimination. xpressiondnb@hotmail.co.uk / www.myspace.com/xpressiondnb. Telephone: 44 (0) 207 482 5545 / info@barvinyl.com / www.barvinyl.com.

MARCH LISTINGS

THURSDAY 6TH MARCH
SPOONFED @ FEZ, Market Passage, Cambridge, CB2 3HX. 10pm-3am. £5 If you email cambridgespoonfed@yahoo.com www.myspace.com/cambridgespoonfed. High Contrast, Commix, Logistics. (Logisitcs' Album Launch Party)

FRIDAY 7TH MARCH
FIZZY FRIDAY @ OH! BAR. 111-113 Camden High Street, London, NW1 7JN. 8pm-4am. Free b4 9.00 then £5. www.myspace.com/fizzyliquid / www.fizzyliquid.com. Heist, Social Security, Mark OD, Inter, Dexcell, MC Harry Shotta + Residents.

SUNDAY 9TH MARCH
METALHEADZ SUNDAY SESSIONS @ CLOCKWORK, 96-98 Pentonville Road, Islington, N1 9JB. 7pm-1am. £6 (£5 NUS). www.myspace.com/metalheadz-sundaysessions. Goldie, A - Sides, Vapour, SP MC.

TUESDAY 11TH MARCH
SOCIALISM @ INIGO, 642 Wandsworth Rd, London SW8. 8.00 - 2.30. £5 B4 11.30, £7 After, Ladies Free B4 10.30. www.inigobar.com. Digital, Sappo, Baron, Massacre, Kombinate, Ramshackle Kru, Altitude, Fatman D, Shabba, Rage, Irie, Bennie D, Raggadon.

WEDNESDAY 12TH MARCH
DETONATE LIVE @ RESCUE ROOMS, Goldsmith St, Nottingham. 8.30pm. £8 Adv. Magnetic Man Feat. Skream, Benga & Artwork. www.detonate1.co.uk . info@detonate1.co.uk

FRIDAY 14TH MARCH
STREETWISE BREAKS @ INNOCENCE, High Street, Newmarket, Suffolk. 9-3. £7. www.streetwisemusic.co.uk, www.virtualinnocence.co.uk. DJ Shimon & MC Darrison, Double U, Mr B + More.

STIMULUS @ SMACK, 5-9 Tavistock Street, Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5PJ. 10.30pm-3am. £6 All Night. 01926 422223 / www.myspace.com/stimulus-dnb. High Contrast, Logistics, Mistabishi, Caution, Samas, Messy MC, MC Algar & MC PM.

ORIGINALITY PROMOTIONS @ SOUND LOUNGE, Lloyds Court, Secklow Gate, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3AT. 08:00 5:00. £5. www.mkdnb.com / www.dnb-space.com. DJ SY, Madcap, DJ Scottie, Wilsh, CK, DJ Ram, DJ Hades, DJ Drift.

BANG FACE 53 @ ELECTROWERKZ, 7 Torrens Street, Islington, London EC1V 1NQ. 9pm - 6am. Tickets £9 / Door £12. Hype + Ticket Info: www.bangface.com. Official neo-rave celebrating the birthday of Albert Einstein on this day in 1879. Dj's clark, Dj Hype, Utah Saints, Rowland The Bastard, Bazooka, Mochipet, Sickboy, Raxyor, Le Couteau Jaune, Saint Acid & The Bang Face Hard Crew.

SATURDAY 15TH MARCH
SON OF DANCE @ SEONE COMPLEX, Weston Street, London, SE1. 10pm – 6am. £12/20 Advance, £25 On The Door. 0208 144 7647. Arenas 1 & 2 In Association With Essence Of Chi: Andy C, Goldie, Hype, Shy FX, Krust, Commix, Friction, Mampi Swift, Simon Bassline Smith, Hazard, Zero Tolerance, Subterra, Mel De'vil, Sophina, Steve Survival, Grimey. Arenas 3 & 4: Randall, Kenny Ken, Jumping Jack Frost, Ash A Tack, Nicky Blackmarket, Dr. S Gachet, Phantasy, Darren Jay, Sense, DJ Trix, Smitty, EZM, Static, Terra, Spindall. Mcs Over 3 Arenas: Eksman, GQ, Fearless, SP:MC, Lowqui, Fatman D, Flux, Stamina, Moose, Youngman MC, Miss Trouble.

SUBBASSFM'S 1ST BIRTHDAY BASH @ CLUB2XS, Bournemouth Triangle, Bournemouth. 10pm-3am. Free Entry. www.subbassfm.com. Dubya B2B Hoody, Karn Evil B2B The Raid, DJ Death B2B Tom, Tantrix B2B Jonjo, Junglemon B2B Tantrum, Culture B2B Redeye, Jamminj B2B Kingy, Moo B2B Dubya, Miss Shortstuff B2B Progression, Flashback B2B Quest. MC'S Sleepy C, Finna , Turbo Don , Supply Dan More T.B.C.

MERGE @ MEDIA, 80 Rose Lane, Norwich, NR1. 10pm To 3amish. £8 B4 11pm. inter.comrecordings@virgin.net. Room 1: Dj Friction, E-Z Rollers, Tekniq, Bassics, Messy MC. Room 2: JMJ, Richie, HE.

HIGHNESS SOUND SYSTEM @ THE BODEGA SOCIAL CLUB, Pelham St, Nottingham. 11pm-4am. £6 On the door. www.myspace.com/highnesssounds. Roots, Reggae and Dub from the Highness Selectors.

FRIDAY 21ST MARCH
AUTOPSY SESSIONS @ VOLKS CLUB, 3 The Colonnade, Madiera Drive, Brighton, BN2 1PS. 11pm - 5am. £7 B4 Midnight. www.autopsydnb.co.uk / www.myspace.com/autopsyevents. Extra 15k Sound From Gramps Hifi. Room 1: Tech Itch 2 Hour Set, Dub One, The Sith & Nekrosis, Raw, MC AD & Skydro. Room 2: Jungle / Dubstep / Hip Hop.

EPIDEMIK @ MINISTRY OF SOUND, 103 Gaunt Street, Elephant & Castle, London. 10pm - 6am. £10. 07966 491554 www.epidemik.com. Jilted Generation Prodigy Pa. Ratpack, Slipmatt, Micky Finn, Darren Jay, Ragga Twins, Robbie Dee, Brandon Block & Alex-P.

DJ MARKY & FRIENDS @ THE END, 18 West Central Street, London, WC1A 1JJ. 10pm - 6am. £13. www.Endclub.Com www.bulldozermedia.com www.inner-groundrecords.com. DJ Marky (4 Hours) + Special Guests.

ROYAL RUMBLE & INNOVATION @ HALLE02, Güteramtstr. 2, 69115 Heidelberg, Germany. 15 Euro B4 12, Then 20 Euro. info@royal-rumble.de. royal-rumble.de / www.sirbenniniles.de. Shy Fx, Bailey, Profile, Jan Sirup, Soul Addiction, MC Skibadee, Ragga Twins, MC Teron, Mc Step Pb, Dj Vibes, Dj Pool, Defonyz, MC Mighty P, MC Renegade.

DETONATE @ PLUG, Sheffield. 10.30pm-5am. £8 Adv. www.detonate1.co.uk, info@detonate1.co.uk. Mampi Swift, Break, Transit Mafia, More Tbc.

FRIDAY 28TH MARCH
BASSMENT @ THE ROOF, 80-84 Queen Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1HT. 8pm-2am. £5 Before 10pm, £6 After. www.bassmentdnb.com Djs: Logistics (Hospital Album Launch Tour), Taro & Soulstice, Linus & Dan B, Smuntee. Bassline MC, Hotrox, Flewid.

BEATS BY NIGHT @ INNOCENCE, High Street, Newmarket, Suffolk. 9-3. £7. www.streetwisemusic.co.uk, www.virtualinnocence.co.uk. Jumping Jack Frost, Taxman, Herbzie, Bud + more.

BLOC CONTROL @ THE CONSORTIUM, Richmond Hill, Bournemouth. 10–4. £4, £7 after 11. www.myspace.com/bloc_control. Distance, Scuba, Mudie, Rilla, Jeep, MC's Manic, Shauny B, Skydro.

DETONATE@ STEALTH, Goldsmith St, Nottingham. 10pm-4am. £10 Adv. www.detonate1.co.uk, info@detonate1.co.uk. Bryan Gee, Logistics, Danny Byrd, N-Type, Transit Mafia, Sci-Phy + More Tbc.

SATURDAY 29TH MARCH
HQ:D&B @ THE CELLAR, Oxford. 8pm - 3am. £6 B4 10, £7 after. Loxy, B-III, Chemical, Azonica. MC Manikular & Burley.

APRIL LISTINGS

THURSDAY 3RD APRIL
SPOONFED @ FEZ, Market Passage, Cambridge, CB2 3HX. 10pm-3am. £5 If you email cambridgespoonfed@yahoo.com www.myspace.com/cambridgespoonfed. DJ's Bryan Gee, Break, Nu:Tone.

FRIDAY 4TH APRIL
THE VINYL TOUCH @ RHYTHM FACTORY, 16-18 Whitechapel Road, E1 1EW London. 10pm-6am. £10 before 11pm, £12 thereafter. Members and NUS: £8 before 11pm, £10. 07920 409454 for more details. www.myspace.com/thevinyl-touch. Freestylers, Far Too Loud, Slipmatt, Ellis Dee, Swifty B, DJ Lock-up, Niki Dimensions, The Magnet Men, Joe Rapid. Hosted by Cash MC, Ken Mac. *Room 2:* Devious D, Mister T, Snypa, Twista, Rumble, Danny C, DJ Upfront, Jynx, Sound Boy. Hosted by 3Flow, Chuckie.

FIZZY FRIDAY @ OH! BAR, 111-113 Camden High Street, London, NW1 7JN. 8pm-4am. Free b4 9.00 then £5. www.myspace.com/fizzyliquid / www.fizzyliquid.com. DJ's Lomax, Kasra, MC Deepers + Residents.

ONE NATION
Brixton Academy, London

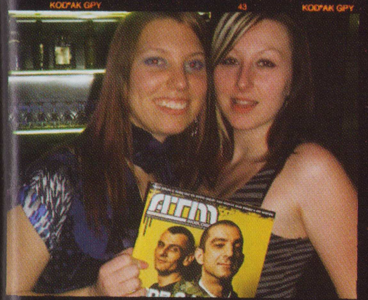
Brixton Carling Academy is normally used a lot for live gigs and performances, but is also home to One Nation, one of the biggest jungle/d'n'b raves on the planet.

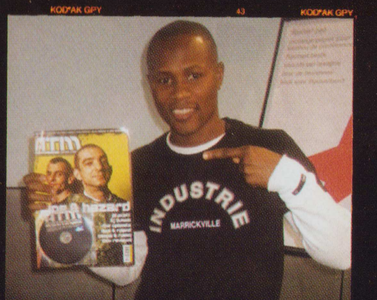
With fat lasers and a fat sound system, the crowd was up for it hard and still going to the early hours of the morning. New skool and old skool ravers were in attendance with plenty groups of ladies and couples having a Valentines smasher.

As we entered the dance, DJ Fu and The Jungle Drummer with MC Stamina were tearing the roof down, it was live. Up next was Sub Focus B2B with Clipz, a different combination that worked really well. The Valve crew stepped up next, Lemon D and Dilllinja dropping 'Unexplained Terrain', the V Classic, plus all their Valve and Ear 2 The Ground sounds, it was a banging set.

One of the best sets of the night though was Hype B2B with Andy C - pure entertainment. 'Dual Voltage' and 'Alien Girl' were some of the classics dropped, Hype scratch record seemed broken, and I mean it had a huge chunk out of it! Meanwhile in the other room you had Network B2B with Ruffride, dropping tunes such as 'Rah' remix, 'Don't Be Silly' by Original Sin, and 'Stop Watching' by Dillinja. Back in the main room we had Bailey and too-hot-too-handle Randall, who got a bit deeper and still kept the dance alive and kicking, plus MCs Skibadee, Shabba, Tonn Piper and GQ hosted the night. All in all a fantastic rave, music to my ears. Big up One Nation, blap blap.

Words: Nick Gramlick





SATURDAY 5TH APRIL

INNOVATION B2B D&B ARENA @ THE CORONET, 26-28 New Kent Road, London SE1 6TJ. 9pm - 7am. £20+B/F (£18 direct from www.innovation.gb.com). 0871 2887 485. DJ Fresh Presents Sound Weapon, Friction, Hazard B2b G Dub, Mampi Swift, Clipz, Randall (3 Deck Set), TC, Chase & Status, Nicky Blackmarket, Modified Motion, Logan D, Skibadee B2b Fun. Shabba D, Eksman B2b Evil B, Fearless, IC3, Ragga Twins, MC Ivory, Bailey, Al, Break, Alix Perez, Heist, DJ Ollie, Subterra & More.

174 @ POGO, The Pod, Harcourt St Dublin. 12:00-03:00. £10 With Flyer. www.myspace.com/onesevenfour. Aaron Jay (Influence Recs) + Bonz, Julie Dillon.

FRIDAY 11TH APRIL

STIMULUS @ SMACK, 5-9 Tavistock Street, Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5PJ. 10.30pm-3am. £6 All Night. 01926 422223 / www.myspace.com/stimulusdnb. Friction, Heist, Pleasure, Benny & Aries, Caution, Messy MC, MC Algar & PM.

DISSIDENT @ THE BLACK SWAN, Stapleton Road, Easton, Bristol. 10-5. £5. www.myspace.com/dissidentfaction. Main Room: Amit (Live), Loxy, Ebk, Mako, Noisy Boy B2b Alkemy, Incite And Breach. Room 2 Hosted By Ruffnek Discotek.

HIGHNESS SOUND SYSTEM @ THE RESCUE ROOMS, Pelham St, Nottingham. 11pm-4am. £10 Adv. www.myspace.com/highnesssounds. Mad Professor & Highness Selectors.

SATURDAY 12TH APRIL

A NU DAWN @ HIDDEN, 100 Tinworth St, London SE11 5EQ. 10pm–6am. Tickets £10, MOTD. 08707 544 445 / 07787 725375. www.myspace.com/nudawn / www.myspace.com/ratpackuklondon. Ratpack, Nicky Blackmarket, Kenny Ken, Ellis Dee and many more. PA's: The Ragga Twins & The House Crew. 3 Rooms of Old Skool, Breakbeats & Hard House.

FRIDAY 25TH APRIL

BASSMENT @ THE ROOF, 80-84 Queen Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1HT. 8pm-2am. £6 Before 10pm, £7 After. www.bassmentdnb.com. DJ's Shy FX, Linus & Dan B, DV8, DJ Active. Hosted By Hotrox, Flewid, Sye.

HERBAL SESSIONS @ THE SYNDICATE, 130-140 Church Street, Blackpool, FY1 3PR. 9-05. £10. www.herbalsessions.com. www.myspace.com/herbalsessionsofficial, www.ticketline.co.uk. Marcus Intalex, Hijak, Kromestar, Ken Evil N Subliminal, Lost Property, Mike Howarth, Symbiosis And High Pressure Sound Systems, Jonny Cruel Shoes, Dj Dubsprout, Fuzzy Worble, Jude, M16 Live, Monty & Guests.

BANG FACE - THE WEEKENDER @ CAMBER SANDS HOLIDAY PARK. 25-27 April. www.bangfaceweekender.com. Squarepusher, Model 500 (Juan Atkins & Mad Mike Banks 1st UK live show), Phil Hartnoll (Orbital DJ Set + Long Range Show), Dopplereffekt (1st UK live show), Altern-8, Modeselektor, Richard Devine, The Flashbulb, Kid606, Bong-Ra, DJ Rephlex Records, Krome & Time, The Panacea, Ceephax Acid Crew, Mala (Digital Mystikz), Aaron Spectre, Venetian Snares, Ragga Twins, Bogdan Raczynski, DJ Stingray, Knifehandchop, Luke Vibert, Kode9, µ-Ziq, Shitmat, Mike Dred, The DJ Producer, Plaid, Chas & Dave, DMX Krew, Remarc, Cylob, DJ Scotch Egg, Doubtful Guest, Cassette Boy, Jackson And His Computer Band, Beardyman, Vexkiddy, Kelpe, Aba Shanti- Warp Records Djs, Saint Acid & The Bang Face Hard Crew, Plus Normski to host Bang Face TV broadcast to all chalets.

BEATS BY NIGHT @ INNOCENCE, High Street, Newmarket, Suffolk. 9-3. £7. www.streetwisemusic.co.uk, www.virtualinnocence.co.uk. DJ Ed Rush, Skibba, Bud, Deetox, Scotty + More.

SATURDAY 26TH APRIL

BASSMENT LOUNGE @ SOUND LOUNGE, Lloyds Court, Central Milton Keynes MK9 3AT. Brockie, Mickey Finn, Skibadee, Shabba, Eksman, Det, Hazard, Sparxx, Sly, Mark S, Network, Danny Darko, Tremor.

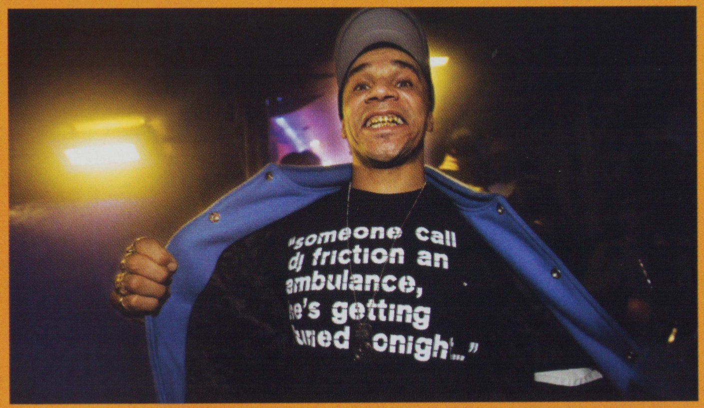
HQ:D&B @ THE CELLAR, Oxford. 8pm - 3am. £6 B4 10, £7 After. Zero Tolerance & Steo (Cia). Mc's Manikular & Mantmast.

WEDNESDAY 30TH APRIL

JUNGLE FEVER! 15th B-Day Bash @ MS Connexion. Angelstrasse 33, 68199 Mannheim-Neckarau, Germany. 22.00-10.00. 20 Euro. info@royal-rumble.de. www.royal-rumble.dee / www.sirbennimiles.de. Brockie, Bryan Gee, Darren Jay, Funky Flirt, Mickey Finn, Mc Det, Mc Flux, Mc Trigger, Mc Bassman, Mc Fearless, Freeze, Jan Sirup, Humpty C, Funksta & Rbf, Systec & Shar Pei, Elistha & Soulpride, Mc Life, Mc Shadow, Mc Mighty P, Mc Kwestion, Mc Eddy Freez

SUNDAY 4TH MAY

DETONATE INDOOR FESTIVAL @ ROCK CITY, Stealth & Rescue Rooms, Talbot Street, Nottingham. 8pm-6am. £25 Adv. www.detonate1.co.uk, Roni Size, Scratch Perverts, Skream, Andy C, Diplo, Evil 9, Digital Mystikz, Shy FX, Jehst, Mary Anne Hobbs, High Contrast, Boy 8Bit, Jessie Rose, Benga, Friction, Valve Soundsystem, Dillinja & Lemon, Stig & Dr Syntax, DJ Derek, Highness Soundsystem + more Tbc.



SHOGUN VS METALHEADZ

The End, London

This event was like a dream come true for the many drum and bass lovers who turned out in their hordes to witness one of the best events in London in recent times. Two labels that command the upmost respect for their musical output showcased all of their big guns on the evening and the line-up was one that will be difficult to better anytime soon.

Over the course of the night, at one of the world's most famous D&B venues, were none other than Break B2B Icicle, Alix Perex B2B Commix, Friction B2B Goldie and Doc Scott B2B Randall. With MCs, SP and Rage also in attendance, this was a night to go down in the history books.

On arrival at The End the big cue signalled the evening was going to be a busy one and heading down the legendary End steps to the main room we were greeted by Break & Icicle absolutely smacking it over the very capable Thunder Ridge sound system. When Break's nasty remix of 'Bambaataa' got dropped the crowd got rowdy and you know its all about the second drop on this one!

Taking time for a breather and to grab a rum and coke from the bar we saw many, many industry heads in attendance for this event and caught Flight playing a mixture of 4/4 and dubstep with Claude Von Stroke's 'Who's Afraid Of Detroit' still doing it for us, the bar staff and the people who were getting down to it in the back room.

Later on Alix Perez & Commix dropped a deeper and darker shade of drum and bass, which showed why they're right up there with the most exciting artists in the industry right now, before head honchos Friction & Goldie (complete with custom tees, for extra jokes) took to the booth with SP on vocal duties. This set smacked hard and was one of the highlights of the night.

We're glad to hear there's more of these events planned in the future, so if you missed this one make sure you get down for the next one and find out what all the fuss is about.

Photos: Matt Cheetham

who shot ya?

1. MC AD 2. Andy C 3. Ash Nightbreed 4. Benstar 5. Boy Delirium 6. Bridge 7. Clipz 8. Cntrl Z 9. Dazzler 10. Dizzee Rascal & Mark OD 11. DJ Emtek 12. Dread 13. DVS 14. FT 15. GQ 16. DJ Hype 17. Icicle 18. Master X 19. Network 20. Ollie 21. Randall 22. Rob & Slowy (Startrippers) 23. Rocker Junior & Will 24. Ruff Ryde 25. Shabba 26. SP:MC 27. Sub Focus 28. Swindle

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